# ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

# PROPHECY:

IN THE COURSE OF WHICH
ARE ELUCIDATED MANY PREDICTIONS, WHICH OCCUR

IN ISAIAH, OR DANIEL,

IN THE WRITINGS OF THE EVANGELISTS,

OR THE BOOK OF REVELATION;

And which are thought to foretell, among other Great Events,
A Revolution in France, favourable to the Intereſts of Mankind,
The Overthrow of the Papal Power, and of Eccleſiaſtical Tyranny,
The Downfal of Civil Deſpotiſm,
And the ſubſequent Melioration of the State of the World:

TOGETHER

WITH A LARGE COLLECTION OF

EXTRACTS,

INTERSPERSED THROUGH THE WORK, AND TAKEN FROM

*NUMEROUS COMMENTATORS;*

AND PARTICULARLY FROM

Joſeph Mede, Vitringa, Dr. Thomas Goodwin, Dr. Henry More, Dr. John Owen, Dr. Creſſener, Peter Jurieu, Brenius, Biſhop Chandler, Sir Iſaac Newton, Mr. William Lowth, Fleming, Bengelius, Daubuz, Whitby, Lowman, Biſhop Newton, and Biſhop Hurd.

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# CHAPTER XVIII.

## ON THE FATE OF THE TEN HORNS OF THE SECULAR BEAST.

FROM ch. xvi. of the apocalypſe a prophecy has been cited, which foretells the overthrow of a number of confederated princes. But there are prophecies yet more expreſs. There are prophecies, which clearly announce that every antichriſtian government in Europe ſhall be deſtroyed. To the philanthropiſt ſuch concluſions, if ſatisfactorily deduced from the prophetic ſcriptures, muſt be capable of imparting the pureſt pleaſure.

If I am aſked, why I take ſo much pains to explain the prophecies, which foretell the arbitrary conduct and the ſubſequent deſtruction of the antichriſtian princes of Europe, I reply, that I have the higheſt authority for doing it, the particular recommendation of the prophet himſelf. At the cloſe of the deſcription of the ten-horned Beaſt, which repreſents theſe kings, St. John adds, (xiii. 9, 10.), *If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity ſhall go into captivity: he that killeth with the ſword muſt be killed with the ſword*[1]. Now the firſt of theſe ſentences unqueſtionably ſignifies, that the reader of the apocalypſe ſhould, to this part of it, pay a marked attention, and ſtudy it with the greateſt care. Thus, as bp. Newton obſerves[2], 'it was cuſtomary with

[1] The two great evils produced by the ten-horned Beaſt, ſays an annotator on this verſe, 'will be *ſlavery* and *death*. And God will, in his due 'time, ariſe and avenge.' Cradock.

[2] In loc.

'our *Saviour*, when he would have his auditors pay a 'particular attention to what he had been ſaying, to add, '*He who hath ears to hear let him hear.*' The ſubſequent ſentence of the prophet Mr. Pyle thus paraphraſes: 'he will aſſuredly vindicate the cauſe of his true religion, 'and pull down the antichriſtian powers that oppreſs it, 'by a moſt exemplary deſtruction; and cauſe his true 'and faithful ſervants to reap the bleſſings of Chriſ-'tianity in ſafety, glory, and peace.' Perhaps this verſe does not merely denounce the deſtruction of the antichriſtian monarchies themſelves, but may denote more particularly, with reſpect to individual princes, that the time will come, when he who enſlaveth his people ſhall himſelf be impriſoned; when he who maketh havock with the ſword ſhall himſelf be put to death.

I ſhall next quote from ch. xvii. an important paſſage, which foretells the overthrow of the antichriſtian monarchies, briefly indeed, but clearly. *And the angel ſaid unto me—the Ten Horns which thou ſaweſt are Ten Kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beaſt. Theſe have one mind, and ſhall give their power and ſtrength unto the Beaſt. Theſe ſhall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them.* That this is not ſpoken of the conduct of the Ten Kings at any particular time, but of their conduct in general, is clear and indiſputable. Can any man then, pretending to the ſlighteſt ſkill in the diction of prophecy, attentively inſpect theſe verſes (v. 12, 13, 14), and at the ſame time entertain a doubt (however ignorant he may be of what has actually paſſed in the world), whether the maſs of European princes have not been eminently hoſtile to human happineſs and to genuine Chriſtianity[3]? As

[3] 'The ſplendor, luxury, ſelf-intereſt, martial glory, &c. which paſs 'for eſſentials in Chriſtian governments, are totally oppoſite to the meek, 'humble

As the Roman Weſtern empire was not broken into ſeparate portions, and governed by a number of diſtinct and independent princes, till ſeveral centuries after the delivery of his prophecy, our inſpired apoſtle accordingly apprizes us, that, in his time, the epoch of their dominion was not arrived. They had, as he expreſſes himſelf, *received no kingdom* AS YET. After obſerving that we do not read in the book of Revelation of any other perſonage denominated a Beaſt, excepting the two-horned and the ten-horned Beaſts; I ſhall cite the next clauſe of v. 12, which aſſerts, that *the Ten Kings receive power as kings one hour with the Beaſt.* The Beaſt pointed to in this paſſage the prophet ſpeaks of as diſtinct from the Ten Kings; and he thereby has admoniſhed us, that he has not here in view the greater of the two Beaſts, but the ſmaller, who has two horns and is the repreſentative of the antichriſtian prieſthood. 'What we tranſlate *one hour*, μιαν ὡραν, ought,' ſays Lowman, 'to have been tranſlated *the ſame hour* or point of 'time, as ſeveral learned interpreters have juſtly ob-'ſerved[4].—The Beaſt then, and the Ten Kings or King-'doms, are to be contemporary powers, or to reign at 'the ſame time.' *Theſe have one mind*, i. e. ſays Lowman, 'they have the ſame deſign and intention[5].' Will it not be ſuſpected by ſome, that the full expoſition of this prophetical clauſe is this, that, whilſt their joint reign ſubſiſts, I mean that of the antichriſtian kings and their allies in the prieſthood, too many among them will have the ſame common deſign of pillaging the property,

'humble, ſelf-denying ſpirit of Chriſtianity; and whichſoever of theſe 'finally prevails over the other, the preſent form of the government muſt 'be diſſolved.' Hartley on Man, 1749, 8vo. vol. II. p. 366.

[4] As for inſtance Vitringa and bp. Newton.

[5] Pref. p. 17.

and of uſurping the rights, of mankind? Beſides, in another view, how true an idea do theſe verſes ſuggeſt of the deſpots of Europe! They ſpeak a ſimilar language to ſome before quoted from ch. xiii. Conſult the pages of modern hiſtory; and examine, if they have not uniformly *given their power and ſtrength unto the Beaſt*, that has *two horns like a lamb?* Have they not, to the authors of ſpiritual deſpotiſm, conſtantly imparted aid? Are not theſe the perſons who have moſt ſucceſsfully *made war with the lamb?* Has not an unlawful power been aſſumed by them over the religion of Jeſus? When they have not dared themſelves to model and to alter it, have they not authoriſed the claim in a foreign prieſt or a domeſtic ſynod? Are not the annals of every country, and of almoſt every period, ſtained by the blood of the diſciples of *the Lamb*, which they have ſhed; and have they not levelled their bittereſt oppoſition againſt thoſe, who have been moſt diſtinguiſhed for purity of faith, of practice, and of external worſhip?

The ſentence pronounced againſt the ſeveral anti-chriſtian monarchies of Europe in v. 8 and 11 of this chapter, I muſt not altogether omit. In the former place, it is affirmed, that *the Beaſt having Ten Horns*, which at the time of the prophecy had no being, ſhall ariſe, and afterwards *ſhall go into perdition*, or, as it might have been tranſlated, *ſhall go into deſtruction*. In the latter, it is again ſaid of him, that he *goeth into perdition*.

'Theſe Ten Horns,' ſays an early commentator, 'are 'Ten European Kings, and whoever reckons them up, 'I find, brings in the Kings of Britain, for one of the 'horns of this terrible and fearful monſter[6].' But this is a ſubject, on which I ſhall, for certain reaſons which

[6] Haughton on Antichriſt, p. 88.

it

it is not difficult to comprehend, decline entering: and I ſhall only obſerve, that though *every other European monarchy* ſhould ſtand juſtly chargeable with notorious antichriſtianiſm, it does not *of neceſſity* follow, that that of Great Britain carries upon it the ſame fatal marks; nor, though *every other writer* on the ſubject ſhould maintain, that the Engliſh monarchy is unqueſtionably and of courſe one of the Ten Horns, is it an *inevitable* inference, that the evidence ſhould ſtrike me with equal force, or that I ſhould entertain the opinion at all? It is, however, apprehended, that on this point the mind of the intelligent and unprejudiced reader will not long heſitate to decide.

As the events, foretold by St. John in ch. xvii. are of great importance, and terminate in a manner favourable to the beſt intereſts of mankind, he reſumes the ſubject in ch. xix. *And I ſaw the Beaſt, and the Kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war againſt him that ſat on the horſe,* (i. e. againſt Chriſt) *and againſt his army. And the Beaſt*[7] *was taken, and with him the Falſe Prophet*[8]*, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beaſt, and them that had worſhipped his image: theſe were both caſt alive into a lake of fire.* This paſſage alike reſpects the oppreſſive governments and oppreſſive hierarchies of the European world. The final overthrow of the antichriſtian church, ſays a learned commentator on prophecy, 'will be accompliſhed in the 'ſubverſion of thoſe civil powers, which have been its 'only and its long ſupport[9].' 'It is nothing,' ſays a

[7] '*The Beaſt and the Falſe Prophet*,' i. e. ſays bp. Newton (in loc.), 'the 'Antichriſtian Powers, Civil and Eccleſiaſtical.'

[8] Mr. Wakefield tranſlates it, *the Falſe Teacher.*

[9] *Commentaries and Eſſays*; printed for Johnſon. Signature Synergus, p. 485.

celebrated writer, 'but the *alliance* of the kingdom of 'Chriſt with the kingdoms of this world (an alliance 'which our Lord himſelf expreſsly diſclaimed), that 'ſupports the groſſeſt corruptions of Chriſtianity; and 'perhaps we muſt wait for the fall of the civil powers 'before this moſt unnatural alliance be broken. Calami-'tous, no doubt, will that time be. But what convul-'ſion in the political world ought to be a ſubject of la-'mentation, if it be attended with ſo deſirable an event? 'May the *kingdom of God*, and of Chriſt (that which I 'conceive to be intended in the Lord's prayer) truly and 'fully *come*, though all the kingdoms of the world be re-'moved in order to make way for it[10].'

*Fire* is a ſymbol of deſtruction; and accordingly the *caſting* of *the Beaſt* and *the Falſe Prophet* into *a lake of fire*, denotes, to uſe the words of an early apocalyptical writer upon this paſſage, 'the perpetual ruin of all anti-'chriſtian tyranny, and an utter end of all wicked do-'minion[11].' In the 14th v. of the xxth chapter, imme-diately after the deſcription of the general reſurrection and the day of judgment, the ſame[12] language is em-ployed. It is ſaid of *Death*, that he was *caſt into a lake of fire*. Here alſo the expreſſion has a figurative accep-tation: here alſo it denotes, not torment, but deſtruc-tion[13]: here alſo it is applied, not to a real, but an ideal perſonage. The ten-horned Beaſt and the Falſe Prophet

[10] Prieſtley's Hiſt. of the Corruptions of Chriſtianity, vol. II. p. 489.

[11] The Irenicon Abridged, by W. Sherwin, 1674, p. 37.

[12] In the original the two paſſages vary not at all. In both it is την λιμνην του πυρος, which our tranſlation arbitrarily renders, in one place, *a* lake of fire, in the other, *the* lake of fire.

[13] 'This *lake of fire* is but a ſymbolical notion, or repreſentation of the 'perpetual continuation and unchangeableneſs of that ſtate, into which 'thoſe matters are reduced, which are ſaid to be thrown therein; imply-'ing, that they ſhall no more affect mankind, as being to them utterly 'deſtroyed.' Daubuz.

were

*were both caſt alive into a lake of fire.* 'This,' ſays Dr. Lancaſter in his abridgment of Daubuz, 'not only ſignifies, that the puniſhment of the Beaſt and of the 'Falſe Prophet will be exceeding dreadful, but alſo that 'it will, and at the ſame time the conſequences of it, be 'more terrible than that of their adherents. For we 'muſt conſider, that—the Beaſt and Falſe Prophet are 'bodies politic and perpetual or ſucceſſive; and that the 'deſign here is to ſhew us, that Chriſt will not only 'deſtroy at laſt the perſons, who at that time are in 'poſſeſſion of what is ſignified by the Beaſt and Falſe 'Prophet, but alſo utterly extirpate the ſucceſſion of the 'tyranny and falſe prophecy for ever. So that the Beaſt 'and the Falſe Prophet are perſons in a double capacity; 'that is, perſons in general, enemies to Chriſt, and alſo 'in poſſeſſion of a power, which is to be extinguiſhed 'with them. And therefore their particular judgment 'muſt be conſidered with that double view.' Of theſe two emblematic perſonages the prophet aſſerts, not only that they were thrown into *a lake of fire*, but that they were thrown *alive*. Now, ſays Daubuz, '*alive* ſignifies 'one having power and activity;' and therefore 'when 'they are ſaid to be *caſt alive*,' this may be deſigned 'to 'ſhew, that this ſudden Revolution ſhall happen to them 'whilſt they are vigorous and active, ſtrengthening 'themſelves to reſiſt[14], and little expecting to be ſuddenly overcome, and that all the power of this tyranny 'and falſe prophecy ſhall be ſo deſtroyed, that it ſhall never 'be able to act again. That is, not only that the perſons 'of them that hold the power ſhall be deſtroyed, which 'is but a tranſient puniſhment; but alſo, that their ſuc-

[14] Perfectly does this correſpond with the account of the war of Armageddon, in which the confederated antichriſtian princes are to levy mighty forces, and vigorouſly to exert themſelves, immediately previous to their complete overthrow.

'ceſſion ſhall be ſtopped, and the like power ſhall never 'be revived.'

But enough has been ſaid to ſhew, that a momentous concluſion is to be drawn from the words of St. John. A concluſion highly conſolatory and encouraging. Since we have not only ſeen, that the duration of the ſovereignty of *the Ten Kings* is limited, it being declared, that *they receive power as Kings one hour with the Beaſt* (xvii. 12)[15]; but have ſeen it farther announced by the voice of the prophet, that *the Lamb ſhall overcome the Ten Kings* (xvii. 14), that *the Beaſt having Ten Horns ſhall go into perdition* (xvii. 8, 11), and again, that this *Beaſt was taken, and caſt into a lake of fire* (xix. 20), i. e. totally deſtroyed; we are, on the authority of prophecy, delivered clearly and repeatedly, authorized to conclude, that all the Monarchies of Europe which are antichriſtian will at length be deſtroyed. And were ſcripture altogether ſilent, we might gather from the light of reaſon, that all governments, founded on deſpotiſm and oppreſſion, MUST be offenſive to the Deity. 'From 'the known perfections of God, we conclude he wills 'the happineſs of mankind; and though he condeſcends 'not to interpoſe miraculouſly, that that kind of civil 'polity is moſt pleaſing in his eye[16], which is produc-'tive of the greateſt felicity[17].'

The

[15] It is alſo ſaid, in ch. xiii. 5, of *the Beaſt having Ten Horns*, that *power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

[16] We read but of one government appointed by the Deity; and it was not an HEREDITARY and MONARCHICAL GOVERNMENT, like thoſe of the ſurrounding nations, but a FREE and POPULAR one. I now cite from a reſpectable anonymous writer. 'The government which God 'ordained over the children of Iſrael conſiſted of three parts, beſides the 'magiſtrates of the ſeveral tribes and cities. They had a chief magiſtrate, 'who was called judge or captain, as Joſhua, Gideon, and others; a coun-'cil of 70 choſen men; and THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE 'PEOPLE:

The great Mr. Mede lays it down as a matter undeniably eſtabliſhed, that the two-horned and the ten-horned Beaſts expire together[18]. The former being regarded as the repreſentative of the antichriſtian prieſthood, reaſon herſelf indeed aſſures us it is highly probable, that though ſome particular horns of the Secular Beaſt, with their attendant hierarchies, will be earlieſt demoliſhed; yet that the fall of the other civil and eccleſiaſtical tyrannies, linked as they are by ſo cloſe a union to each other, will be events nearly contemporary. That they will be *abſolutely* contemporary, the 9th and 10th verſes of ch. xviii. ſeem to contradict; ſince they certainly countenance the idea, that the antichriſtian princes of Europe, ſome time previous to their own complete overthrow, will witneſs, within the limits of the Weſtern Roman empire, the total downfal of prieſtly uſurpation. 'We are now to expect ſoon,' ſays Bengelius in the concluſion of his Expoſition of the Apocalypſe, 'the 'harveſt, and the vintage; the pouring out of the vials; 'the judgment of Babylon; the final rage of the Beaſt, 'and his deſtruction.' And he ſhortly after adds, 'the

'PEOPLE: and theſe judges or captains had not the name or power of 'kings, neither was their power tranſmitted to their children.' Remarkable is the declaration of Hoſea, which he makes in the name of the Supreme Being (xiii. 11), *I gave thee a king in mine anger.*

[17] Hall's Apol. for the Freedom of the Preſs. Pref.

[18] *Clav. Apoc.* Pars Prima, Synchroniſmus II. p. 523. 'As theſe two 'Beaſts,' ſays Mr. Whiſton, 'are ſuch great companions while they live 'together, ſo it is certain, that their final period is at one and the ſame 'time, and that they periſh with the ſame common deſtruction,' p. 69. The next are the words of a more modern, a more orthodox, but I will not ſay, an honeſter writer.' 'Theſe two Beaſts,' ſays bp. Halliſax, 'being 'inſeparable one from the other, in their riſe and in their extinction, muſt 'of courſe be conſidered as contemporaries,' p. 245. I juſt add, that that part of the apocalypſe (ch. xvii.), where *the whore of Babylon* is deſcribed as *ſitting* upon the ten-horned Beaſt, evidently implies, that the tyrannizing antichriſtian prieſthood and the Ten Kings ſhould co-exiſt.

'Mighty

'Mighty and the Nobles of this world are aſtoniſhed, 'when they are told there will ſoon be a Great 'Change[19].' This celebrated German, it will perhaps be thought, was ſomewhat premature, when he ſtated this aſtoniſhment to have taken place at the time *he* wrote[20]. But as applied to the preſent æra his ſtatement ſeems perfectly correct. The materials of a Great Change in the European world are already collected; and rapid is their increaſe. At length the period *is* arrived, when all the plunderers of mankind, however diſcriminated by titles or offices, feel alternate emotions of aſtoniſhment and terror; and are ſeriouſly apprehenſive of being buried under the foundation of a Mighty Revolution.

[19] Int. to the Apoc. ut ſupra, p. 326.

[20] His Expoſition was publiſhed in 1740.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ON PROPHECY IN GENERAL, AND THE HEBREW PROPHETS IN PARTICULAR.

HITHERTO I have been *principally* employed in citing extracts, or ſuggeſting thoughts, illuſtrative of the apocalyptic predictions. But as a conſiderable number of thoſe, which occur in the chapters immediately ſucceeding, and in the ſubſequent part of the work, are taken either from Daniel, or from Iſaiah, or from ſome other prophetic writer of the Jewiſh diſpenſation, I have concluded, that ſome extracts, relative to the Hebrew prophets, and to prophecy in general, may be

be properly introduced, and that this part of the work furniſhes a convenient place for their inſertion. Had ſo large an aſſemblage of *general obſervations* been introduced in the beginning of the work, and *added* to thoſe, relative to the apocalypſe, which are brought forward in the iiid and ivth chapters, I ſhould have been apprehenſive, leſt a conſiderable proportion of my readers, being principally ſolicitous to penetrate the import of *particular prophecies*, would have neglected to beſtow upon them that degree of attention which they juſtly claim.

'To know future events,' ſays Dr. Sykes, 'and to be 'able to foretell them, is not, cannot be the effect of 'ſtudy, or peculiar temperature of body; it cannot be 'taught in ſchools, ſince it depends upon an infinity of 'free contingent actions, which he alone who governs 'all things can direct or foreſee. If, therefore, events 'have been foreſeen and foretold, at ſuch diſtance of 'time, as excludes the knowledge of human minds, and 'the powers of their conjectures, it muſt be owing to 'divine influence, and to that alone[1].'

There are, it may be obſerved, ſeveral propoſitions, to prove any one of which, would be to prove the non-exiſtence of prophecy. But then theſe propoſitions are ſo unreaſonable, ſo unfounded, that to give a ſimple ſtatement of them will be ſufficient to convince the honeſt inquirer, that they are completely incapable of proof. If Collins, in his work againſt prophecy, 'would 'have acted the part of a fair and reaſonable adverſary, 'he ſhould,' ſays Dr. Samuel Chandler, 'have proved 'prophecy an impoſſible thing; either that there is no 'God; or that if there is, he doth not concern himſelf 'about the affairs of nations and kingdoms; or that if

[1] Principles and Connexion of Nat. and Rev. Rel. p. 176.

'he

'he doth, he knows nothing before it comes to paſs; or 'that he hath no wiſe purpoſes to anſwer by over-ruling 'the affairs of the world, and executing the purpoſes of 'his own good pleaſure; or that if he hath, he cannot 'diſcover theſe purpoſes to men; or that if he could, 'there is no wiſe and kind purpoſe to be anſwered by 'ſuch a revelation; or that if there is, thoſe to whom he 'vouchſafes a revelation cannot diſcover it to others[2].'

Reſerving all the other general obſervations on prophecy to a ſubſequent part of the chapter, I ſhall here introduce thoſe extracts, which reſpect the authenticity of the Hebrew ſcriptures.

By 'the ſubſiſtence of the Jewiſh people at this time,' ſays Dr. Lardner, 'all are aſſured of the antiquity and 'genuineneſs of the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament. 'Theſe are received by them, and read in their ſyna-'gogues: and they allow, that therein are contained 'promiſes of a great and eminent deliverer. None 'therefore can pretend, that the ſcriptures, ſo often 'appealed to by Chriſt and his apoſtles, are forgeries of 'Chriſtians[3].'

'There can,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'be no doubt but that 'the canon of the Old Teſtament was the ſame in the 'time of our Saviour as it is now[4]; nor could it have

[2] Vindic. of Dan. 1728, p. 30.

[3] Lardner's Works, vol. X. p. 84.

[4] 'The Jewiſh ſynagogues in all countries were,' ſays Mr. Gray, 'numerous: wherever the apoſtles preached, they found them; they were 'eſtabliſhed by the direction of the rabbins in every place, where there 'were ten perſons of full age and free condition.' Accordingly the jealous care, with which the ſcriptures were preſerved in the tabernacle, and in the temple, was 'not more calculated to ſecure their integrity, than that 'reverence which afterwards diſplayed itſelf in the diſperſed ſynagogues, 'and in the churches conſecrated to the Chriſtian faith.' A Key to the Old Teſtament by the Rev. Robert Gray, late of St. Mary Hall, Oxf. 1791, p. 13, 16.

'been

'been corrupted materially after the return of the Jews 'from the Babyloniſh captivity[5], on account of the ſect 'of the Samaritans, which took its riſe about that time. 'For theſe people profeſſed the ſame regard to the ſacred 'books with the Jews themſelves, and were always at 'variance with them about the interpretation of the 'ſcriptures. The Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch is 'now in our hands, and excepting ſome *numbers*, in 'which the different copies and tranſlations of all an-'cient writings are peculiarly ſubject to vary, and a 'ſingle text, in which mount Gerizim and mount Ebal 'are interchanged, it is the very ſame with the Jewiſh 'copy. Not long after this, the books of the Old Teſta-'ment, beginning with the Pentateuch, were tranſlated 'into Greek, and diſperſed, by means of the Jews, into 'almoſt every part of the known world. There is not 'the leaſt probability, that any change, worth any man's 'attempting to make, or in the leaſt affecting any prin-'cipal point of the Jewiſh religion, was made during 'their captivity; which, however, was not ſo long, rec-'koning from the time of the deſtruction of the city by 'Nebuchadnezzar, but that many of thoſe who returned 'from it had a perfect remembrance of the temple of 'Solomon, which had been burned in the ſiege by Ne-'buchadnezzar; for they wept when they ſaw how 'much the new temple was inferior to it, and can it be 'ſuppoſed, but that ſome of theſe people would have 'taken the alarm, and a ſchiſm have been occaſioned, if 'any material change had been attempted to be made in 'the conſtitution of the law, or the contents of the ſa-'cred books.—If we go farther back into the Jewiſh 'hiſtory, we ſhall be unable to pitch upon any time, in

[5] The Jews, according to Prideaux, returned from their captivity at Babylon in the year 535 before the Chriſtian æra.

'which

'which any material change in the ſacred books could
'have been attempted, with the leaſt proſpect of ſucceſs.
'It was one of the moſt earneſt inſtructions of Moſes
'himſelf, that the book of the law, a copy of which was
'lodged in the ark, ſhould be the ſubject of conſtant
'reading and meditation in every Iſraelitiſh family; and
'it was expreſsly appointed, that it ſhould be read pub-
'licly every ſeven years, at the feaſt of Tabernacles,
'Deut. xxxi. 9, 13; and the Levites, who were diſ-
'perſed through all the twelve tribes, were particularly
'appointed to ſtudy and to explain it to the reſt of the
'nation; and notwithſtanding the times of defection and
'idolatry, they were never entirely without prophets,
'and even many thouſands of others, who continued
'firm in the worſhip of the true God, and therefore muſt
'have retained their regard to the ſacred books of the
'law.—Upon the whole, the Jews have, no doubt, acted
'the part of moſt faithful and even ſcrupulous guardians
'of their ſacred books, for the uſe of all the world in
'the times of Chriſtianity. After the laſt of the pro-
'phets, Malachi, they admitted no more books into their
'canon, ſo as to permit them to be read in their ſyna-
'gogues, though they were written by the moſt eminent
'men in their nation; it being a maxim with them, that
'no book could be entitled to a place in the canon of
'their ſcriptures, unleſs it was written by a prophet, or a
'perſon who had had communication with God. That
'the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament have not been
'materially corrupted by the Jews ſince the promulga-
'tion of Chriſtianity,—is evident from the many pro-
'phecies ſtill remaining in their ſcriptures, concerning
'the humiliation and ſufferings of the Meſſiah, in which
'the Chriſtians always triumphed when they diſputed
'with the Jews. Theſe paſſages, therefore, we may
'aſſure ourſelves, would have been the firſt that the

'Jews

'Jews would have practiſed upon, if it had been in their 'power, or in their inclination to do it[6].'

'When corruptions in worſhip and manners, and many 'ſuperſtitious uſages, grew among them, they were,' ſays Dr. Worthington, 'obliged to deviſe an oral law, 'to be handed down by oral tradition, to countenance 'thoſe corruptions and innovations; which law they 'afterwards collected into a body, and committed to 'writing likewiſe. But the *Miſhna* had been needleſs 'and ſuperfluous, durſt they have incorporated their traditions with the ſcriptures. As they have not done 'this, in a caſe in which they were moſt tempted to do 'it, there is leſs room to ſuſpect their having wilfully 'corrupted them in other repects.' So ſcrupulouſly vigilant were the Jews in preſerving 'the ſcriptures, 'that their Maſorites numbered not only the ſections, 'but even the words and letters, that no fraud or inadvertency might corrupt—the leaſt iota of what they 'eſteemed ſo ſacred. If a word happened to be altered 'in any copy, it was to be laid aſide as uſeleſs, or given 'to a poor man to teach his children by, on condition it 'was not brought into the ſynagogue. The prince was 'to copy the original exemplar of the law, laid up in 'the ſanctuary, with his own hand: and every Jew was 'to make it his conſtant diſcourſe and meditation, to 'teach it to his children, and wear part of it on his 'hands and forehead[7].'

'We ſhall,' ſays Mr. Gray, 'be ſtill farther con-'vinced, that the ſacred volume has preſerved its 'genuine purity in every important point, if we con-'ſider how little the Septuagint verſion of the ſcriptures 'differs from the Hebrew copies, notwithſtanding the

[6] Inſtitutes of Nat. and Rev. Rel. 1782, vol. I. p. 297.

[7] Vol. I. p. 136, 140.

'many

'many ages that have elapſed ſince the time of Ptolemy
'Philadelphus, the king of Egypt, who was the ſecond
'monarch of the Macedonian race, about 270 years
'before Chriſt, and under whoſe reign this tranſlation
'was made into Greek. It has been maintained, indeed,
'by ſome learned men, that only the Pentateuch was
'tranſlated at firſt, and that the other books were ren-
'dered into Greek ſucceſſively at different times; how-
'ever this may have been, they were all tranſlated long
'before the birth of Chriſt. This verſion has no im-
'portant variations from the Hebrew, except in ſome
'chronological accounts, occaſioned probably by the
'careleſſneſs of the copyiſts. It was uſed in all thoſe
'countries, where Alexander had eſtabliſhed the Gre-
'cian language, and ſeems to have been admitted into
'the Jewiſh ſynagogues in Judæa, and even at Jeru-
'ſalem, where that language prevailed; and the Septua-
'gint was certainly moſt uſed there in the time of our
'Saviour.—Thus does the general coincidence between
'the Hebrew copies[8], the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the
'Septuagint verſion of the Old Teſtament, demonſtrate
'the unaltered integrity of the ſcriptures in important
'points, as we now poſſeſs them, and this integrity is
'ſtill farther confirmed by the conformity which ſub-
'ſiſts between thoſe various tranſlations of the Bible
'into different languages, which have been performed
'ſince the time of our Saviour.—It appears, therefore,
'that, from the time of their firſt inſpiration to the pre-
'ſent day, the ſacred writings have been diſperſed into
'ſo many different hands, that no poſſible opportunity
'could be furniſhed for confederate corruption, and

[8] In the bible of Kennicott are the moſt conſiderable variations of nearly 700 different Hebrew manuſcripts; and many more have been collated by the more recent labours of De Roſſi.

'every

'every designed alteration must immediately have been 'detected[9].'

'All the books of scripture have also,' observes Dr. Priestley, 'many *internal marks* of their being the 'genuine production of the ages, in which they are said 'to have been written, as they contain so many allusions 'to particular persons, places, opinions, and customs, 'which are known, from other allowed histories, to 'have existed in those times[10].' In agreement with this remark of Dr. Priestley, Dr. Hartley asserts, that 'history and chronology were in so uncertain a state in 'ancient times, that the prophecies concerning foreign 'countries *could not* have been adapted to the facts, *even* '*after they had happened*, with so much exactness as 'modern enquirers have shewn the scripture-prophecies 'to be, *by a learned nation*, and much less by the Jews, 'who were remarkably ignorant of what passed in foreign countries[11].'

The pretensions of the Hebrew prophets 'to be considered as God's appointed servants, were,' says Mr. Gray, 'demonstrated by the unimpeachable integrity of 'their characters; by the intrinsic excellence and tendency of their instruction; and by the disinterested 'zeal, and undaunted fortitude, with which they persevered in their great designs. These were still farther 'confirmed by the miraculous proof which they dis-

[9] Key to the Old Test. p. 20, 22. After observing that the Septuagint may have been translated from *very ancient* Hebrew manuscripts, bp. Newcome adds, 'this observation may be extended to the Chaldee paraphrase 'of Jonathan, made about the time of Christ; to the Syriac version, which 'is generally attributed to the first century; to the imperfect Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, who lived in the second 'century; and even to the Latin version, of which Jerom was the author 'in the fourth century.' *Attempt towards an Improved Version of Ezekiel.* Dublin, 1788. Pref. p. 36.

[10] Institutes, vol. I. p. 303. [11] On Man, vol. II. p. 152.

'played of divine ſupport, and by the immediate completion of many leſs important predictions which they 'uttered. Such were the credentials of their exalted 'character, which the prophets furniſhed to their contemporaries; and we, who having lived to witneſs the 'appearance of the ſecond diſpenſation, can look back 'to the connexion which ſubſiſted between the two 'covenants, have received additional evidence of the in'ſpiration of the prophets, in the atteſtations of our 'Saviour and his apoſtles; and in the retroſpect of a 'germinant and gradually maturing ſcheme of prophecy, 'connected in all its parts.—We have ſtill farther in'controvertible proofs of their divine appointment, in 'the numerous prophecies, which, in theſe latter days, 'are fulfilled, and ſtill under our own eyes continue to 'receive their completion[12].'

The next quotation is from that ingenious and truly liberal prelate, Dr. Newcome, bp. of Waterford. 'God 'raiſed up a ſucceſſion of prophets among his people for 'many wiſe and gracious purpoſes. They were not only 'deſiged to retain the Jews in the worſhip of the one 'true God; but to ſpread the knowledge of him among 'the neighbouring nations, by the fame of their predic'tions and miracles. They were a barrier againſt thoſe 'prevailing kinds of ſuperſtition which conſiſted in the 'ſuppoſed evocation of departed ſpirits, and in conſult'ing imaginary local deities, for the purpoſe of gratify'ing the natural thirſt which all mankind have for the 'knowledge of futurity.—It muſt alſo be obſerved, that 'the atteſtations given by the prophets to the Moſaic 'law, their inſtructions and exhortations, their reproofs 'and threatenings, were powerful means of preſerving 'the Jews in obedience, and eminent diſplays of the di-

[12] Key to the Old Teſt. p. 313.

'vine

'vine goodneſs and compaſſion. Another deſign in 'ſending the prophets was, that—they might record 'God's dealings with his people and with other adjoin-'ing nations and empires; and might thus tranſmit to 'after ages a moſt inſtructive hiſtory of his adorable 'ways in governing the world. Joſephus aſſerts[13], that, 'from the death of Moſes to the reign of Artaxerxes, 'the prophets who ſucceeded that legiſlator wrote the 'tranſactions of their own times.—This aſſertion is con-'firmed by the ſacred writers; who mention the name of 'many prophets as having recorded the affairs of the 'Jewiſh nation. A farther and moſt important reaſon 'for inſtituting the prophetic order was, that, by a long 'ſeries of predictions, the attention of the Jews might be 'turned to the coming of their Meſſiah; and that the 'faith of ſucceeding ages in that great event might be 'thus confirmed. The writings of theſe prophets bear 'plain ſignatures of their divine authority. Examine 'the books of the Greek and Roman ſages; and obſerve 'what diſcordant opinions *they* contain on almoſt every 'point of theology and philoſophy. But in the Hebrew 'prophets there is a wonderful harmony of doctrine for 'above a thouſand years[14]; unparalleled in the writ-'ings of any country. Hiſtory teaches us, that a great 'number of their prophecies has been accompliſhed; 'and we know that ſome of them are accompliſhing at 'this day. It alſo peculiarly deſerves our notice, that 'theſe holy men entertained the moſt worthy concep-'tions of the Deity in the midſt of an idolatrous nation; 'and inculcated the ſupreme excellence of moral duties, 'when all around them, even the few worſhippers of 'Jehovah himſelf, were ſolely intent on ritual obſerv-

[13] Contr. Ap. I. 8.

[14] 'From Moſes before Chriſt about 1500, to Malachi before Chriſt 'about 436.'

'ances. The writings, which theſe men of God have 'tranſmitted down to us, will be eminently uſeful in 'every age of the Chriſtian church; not only as they 'contain illuſtrious prophecies of many events and eſpe-'cially of our Bleſſed Lord's appearance, but for their 'magnificent deſcriptions of the Deity, for their animat-'ing leſſons of piety and virtue, and for the indignation 'which they expreſs and the puniſhments which they de-'nounce againſt idolatry and vice: which particular 'topics, among many other inſtructive and important 'ones, are treated by them with uncommon variety, 'beauty and ſublimity, and with an authority becoming 'ambaſſadors of The Moſt High[15].'

In enumerating the uſes of prophecy in ancient times, Dr. Jortin ſays,

'1. It ſerved to ſecure the belief of a God and of a 'providence. As God is inviſible and ſpiritual, there 'was cauſe to fear, that in the firſt and ruder ages of the 'world, when men were buſier in cultivating the earth 'than in cultivating arts and ſciences, and in ſeeking 'the neceſſaries of life, than in the ſtudy of morality, 'they might forget their creator and governor; and 'therefore God maintained amongſt them the great ar-'ticle of faith in him, by manifeſtations of himſelf; by 'ſending angels to declare his will; by miracles; and by 'prophecies. Theſe were barriers againſt atheiſm.'

'2. It was intended to give men the profoundeſt 'veneration for that amazing knowledge from which 'nothing was concealed, not even the future actions of 'creatures, and the things which as yet were not. How 'could a man hope to hide any counſel, any deſign, or 'thought from ſuch a being?'

[15] An Attempt towards an Improved Verſion of the Twelve Minor Prophets, 1785, pref. p. 5.

3. 'It

'3. It contributed to keep up devotion and true re-
'ligion, the religion of the heart, which conſiſts partly
'in entertaining juſt and honourable notions of God and
'of his perfections, and which is a more rational and a
'more acceptable ſervice than rites and ceremonies.'

'4. It excited men to rely upon God, and to love
'him, who condeſcended to hold this mutual intercourſe
'with his creatures[16].'

With reſpect to the Hebrew prophets, 'whoſe in-
'ſpired writings ſtill continue to inſtruct mankind, it
'may,' ſays Mr. Gray, 'be affirmed, that in the long
'and illuſtrious ſucceſſion from Moſes to Malachi, *not*
'*one* appears, who was not entitled to conſiderable reve-
'rence by the diſplay of great and extraordinary virtues.
'Employed in the exalted office of teaching and reform-
'ing mankind, they appear to have been animated with
'a becoming and correſpondent zeal.—The moſt intem-
'perate princes were ſometimes compelled unwillingly
'to hear and to obey their directions, though often ſo
'incenſed by their rebuke, as to reſent it by the ſevereſt
'perſecutions. Then it was, that the prophets evinced
'the integrity of their characters, by zealouſly encoun-
'tering oppreſſion, hatred, and death, in the cauſe of
'religion. Then it was, that they firmly ſupported *trial*
'*of cruel mockings and ſcourgings; yea, moreover, of*
'*bonds and impriſonment. They were ſtoned, they were*
'*ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword:*
'*they wandered about, deſtitute, afflicted, tormented*[17].'

To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks Mr. Lowth. 'With what
'undaunted courage and conſtancy did they reprove the
'popular vices of the times they lived in? Not ſparing
'the greateſt perſons either out of fear or flattery. And if

[16] Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. 2d ed. vol. I. p. 60.
[17] Heb. xi. 36, 37. Key to the Old Teſt. p. 328.

'we ſuppoſe them to have acted like men in their wits '(and there is no tolerable reaſon to ſuſpect the con-'trary), we muſt conclude, that nothing but a ſenſe of 'their duty could prompt them to do this; for they 'could propoſe no advantage to themſelves by it, but on 'the contrary were to expect all the ſcorn and miſery, 'which the angry and revengeful temper of wicked men 'in power, whom they had offended, could bring upon 'them. And it could certainly be no pleaſure to be 'continually reproving men, when there was little or no 'hopes of reclaiming them: nay when they had not ſo 'much civility as to thank them for their good intentions, 'and take the good advice, which they offered, kindly at 'their hands. If it had not been purely out of a prin-'ciple of conſcience, and that they were perſuaded of 'the truth and great concern of theſe things, and there-'fore ſpoke, they might, with much more advantage to 'themſelves, have let men be quiet and go on ſecurely 'in their ſins. Many of their troubles and ſufferings we 'find recorded in their own books, but ſeveral other 'ſcripture-writers aſſure us, that they were generally 'martyrs for the truth's ſake, and yet none of theſe ſuf-'ferings could prevail with them to retract any thing 'they had ſaid, or to confeſs that they had been deluded 'themſelves, or impoſed upon others, and ſaid, *the Lord* '*ſaith*, though he had not ſpoken.'

We find, ſays the ſame writer, that they ſet forth the abſurdity of Pagan idolatry with great ſtrength 'of argu-'ment: and endeavour to give men clear and diſtinct 'notions of God's ſpirituality, unity, omnipreſence, uni-'verſal providence,—and juſtice in rewarding men ac-'cording to their works. They unfold the methods of 'providence in diſpoſing of kingdoms, and making uſe 'of wicked princes and nations to be the inſtruments of 'God's juſtice in puniſhing the ſins of others. Such

'dif-

'diſcourſes do not look like the idle dreams of a melan-
'choly and diſturbed fancy, but do indeed anſwer the
'character they pretend to[18].'

'Whilſt other nations,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'were ad-
'dicted to the moſt wretched ſuperſtitions, having re-
'courſe to various divinations, and arts of witchcraft,
'whenever they wanted to get intelligence concerning
'future events, or the aſſiſtance of ſuperior powers, the
'Jewiſh people were taught to hold all theſe things in
'deſerved contempt and abhorrence. They were in-
'ſtructed to expect no information concerning future
'events, or aſſiſtance in any undertaking, but from the
'one living and true God; and they were commanded
'to puniſh all thoſe who pretended to the abominable
'arts of divination and witchcraft with death. It is ob-
'ſerved, alſo, that the Jewiſh prophets delivered them-
'ſelves with gravity and ſerioufneſs, worthy of the ma-
'jeſty of him that ſent them, and did not uſe thoſe vio-
'lent convulſions, foamings at the mouth, and extrava-
'gant geſtures, which the heathen diviners had recourſe
'to, in order to dazzle and impoſe upon thoſe who con-
'ſulted them. So far is there from being any pretence
'for ſaying, that the Jews were naturally more intelli-
'gent than their neighbours, and attained thoſe juſt no-
'tions of religion and morality by their own reaſon and
'good ſenſe, that their own hiſtory always repreſents
'them as ſtiff-necked, and ſlow of underſtanding; and
'to this very day their enemies conſtantly reproach
'them as being the moſt ſtupid of mankind. Beſides,
'their hiſtory ſhews, that the Jews were naturally as
'prone to idolatry and ſuperſtition as any other people
'could be; and their frequent relapſes into the idolatry

[18] Lowth's Vindication of the Divine Authority and Inſpiration of the Old and New Teſtament, 1692, p. 118, 121.

'of their neighbours—demonſtrate, that, had it not been 'for divine inſtructions, inculcated again and again, they 'would have been far from ſhewing an example of a 'purer religion, or more rational worſhip, than ſuch as 'prevailed in other countries[19].'

'The characters of the eminent perſons mentioned in 'the ſcriptures ariſe,' ſays Dr. Hartley, 'ſo much, in an 'indirect way, from the plain narrations of facts,' and 'their ſins and imperfections are ſo fully ſet forth by 'themſelves, or their friends, with their condemnation 'and puniſhment,—that we have in this a remarkable 'additional evidence for the truth of this part of the 'ſcripture-hiſtory.' At the ſame time the character of the prophets in general was uncommonly excellent. Far too excellent, indeed, 'to allow the ſuppoſition of an im-'pious fraud and impoſture; which muſt be the caſe, if 'they had not divine authority[20].'

If the prophetic writings of the Jews were the fabrications of fanaticiſm or impoſture, 'what imaginable 'reaſon is there,' aſks a divine of the laſt century, 'why 'the oracles of all the Heathen nations ſhould never' have been much regarded, and now, in a manner, be 'utterly loſt, and that the books of the Jews ſhould ſtill 'be preſerved in their full authority; but the power and 'advantage of truth in theſe, and the want of it in 'them[21]?'

The great *variety* obſervable *in the ſtyle* of the books of the Old Teſtament 'makes it improbable,' ſays Dr. Doddridge, 'they ſhould have been the work of *one*, 'and the *unity of deſign*, that they ſhould have been the 'invention of *many:* for if theſe ſuppoſed inventors 'lived in different ages, they could not have conſulted

[19] Inſtitutes, vol. I. p. 366. [20] On Man, vol. II. p. 170.

[21] Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs and Certainty of the Chr. Rel. 1698, vol. I. p. 253.

'with

'with each other; and if they lived in the ſame age, the 'largeneſs of their plan would only have ſubjected them 'to new difficulties, without being likely to anſwer any 'valuable end[22].' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks bp. Hurd. In all the Hebrew prophets a unity of deſign is conſpicuous; 'yet without the leaſt appearance of *collu-* '*luſion*, ſince *each* prophet hath his own peculiar views, 'and enlarges on facts and circumſtances unnoticed by 'any other. Farther ſtill, theſe various and ſucceſſive 'prophecies are ſo intimately blended, and, as we may 'ſay, incorporated with each other, that the credit of *all* 'depends on the truth of *each*. For, the accompliſh- 'ment of them falling in different times, every preced- 'ing prophecy becomes ſurety, as it were, for thoſe that 'follow; and the failure of any one muſt bring diſgrace 'and ruin on all the reſt[23].'

The greater part of the Hebrew prophets are written in poetry[24]. Now the graceful dignity of the Hebrew poetry cannot, obſerves a great proficient in biblical learning, 'be always perceived in a verbal tranſlation; 'which not uncommonly diſguiſes the original, as much 'as a proſaic rendering would caſt a veil over the beau- 'ties of Homer or Sophocles. However,' ſays this writer, 'various kinds of beauty will ever ſhine by their 'native ſplendour throughout the Hebrew ſcriptures[25].'

Amongſt other conſiderations, which may be adverted to as accounting for the obſcurity to be found in the Hebrew ſcriptures, it may be remarked, that they are the productions of perſons, who lived in A PERIOD OF TIME, and in A COUNTRY OF THE GLOBE, far remote from our own. Accordingly, ſays bp. Chandler,

[22] Doddridge's Lect. 4to. 1763, p. 280. [23] Vol. I. p. 136.

[24] On this point ſee lectures 18, 19, and 20 of the *Prælectiones* of bp. Lowth.

[25] Newcome's Ezekiel, pref. p. 38.

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'the Hebrew, as other Eaſtern languages, is entirely dif-
'ferent from the European. Many things are there left
'to be ſupplied by the quickneſs of the reader's appre-
'henſion, which are with us expreſſed by proper words
'and repetitions. Particles disjunctive and adverſative,
'ſignificative marks of connexion, and of tranſition
'from one ſubject to another, are often omitted here.
'Dialogues are carried on, objections anſwered, com-
'pariſons made, without notice in the diſcourſe[26].'

Beſides, the remains of the Hebrew language are, bp. Newcome obſerves, 'comprehended in one volume;
'ample indeed, and greatly diverſified as to its matter
'and ſtyle, but of very inconſiderable bulk, when com-
'pared with the Greek and Roman writings, which have
'eſcaped the wreck of time. Hence,' ſays the learned prelate, 'it follows, that we are not acquainted with its
'full extent. If the book of Jaſher and of Lamenta-
'tions, all the odes of Solomon, and all his writings on
'natural hiſtory, were now extant; if the larger annals
'of the kings of Judah and Iſrael, and the hiſtories aſ-
'ſcribed to ſeveral prophets, had alſo been tranſmitted to
'us, the Hebrew tongue would have been enriched with
'many additional words and phraſes, and many dark paſ-
'ſages in the books which are preſerved would have
'been placed in the cleareſt light.'

But notwithſtanding the exiſtence of ſuch paſſages be admitted, yet, ſays this able critic, 'there are very
'few words or phraſes in the Hebrew ſcriptures, of
'which a probable explanation cannot be given, either
'from the nature of the thing, or the context, or a
'compariſon of the doubtful place with parallel ones,
'or the aid of the ſiſter languages, or the interpre-
'tations of the ancient tranſlators.—The books of
'Moſes contain an authentic ſyſtem of the religious

[26] Def. of Chr. from the Proph. Intr. p. 11.

'and

'and political laws under which the Hebrews lived. 'The miſcellaneous contents of their ſacred writings 'largely explain their cuſtoms and opinions. Their 'own writers, ſince the volume of their ſacred writings 'was completed, ſupply no ſmall aſſiſtance on theſe 'ſubjects: and the accounts which hiſtorians and tra-'vellers give of the Eaſt, where manners continue unal-'tered through a courſe of ages, are a farther ſource of 'moſt uſeful information.—We alſo derive important 'aſſiſtance from the Maſoretic punctuation; from the 'grammars, lexicons, concordances, and commentaries 'of the later Jews, and from the more complete, learned, 'and judicious ones of modern times;—and from that 'grand and highly uſeful undertaking, the collation of 'Hebrew and Samaritan manuſcripts. The difficulties 'in the Hebrew ſcriptures will be diminiſhed in propor-'tion as our external helps are multiplied; and as theſe 'ineſtimable books are carefully ſtudied by men, who 'add to ſagacity and judgment a large ſhare of human 'learning, and that inſight into the nature of language, 'which ariſes from logical and critical inquiries, and 'from an acquaintance with the ſtructure of the learned 'tongues and of the kindred oriental dialects[27].'

I ſhall, ſays the great Dr. Clarke, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, point 'at ſome particu-'lar extraordinary prophecies, which deſerve to be care-'fully conſidered and compared with the events, whether 'they could poſſibly have proceeded from chance or 'from enthuſiaſm.' Among thoſe to which he has ap-pealed, I ſhall cite only a part of what he ſays reſpect-ing the fate of thoſe opulent cities of antiquity, Baby-lon and Tyre. 'Concerning Babylon it was particu-'larly foretold, that it ſhould be[28] ſhut up and beſieged

[27] Newcome's Ezekiel, pref. p. 31, 36, 37.

[28] Iſ. xiii. 17, xxi. 2.

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'by the Medes, Elamites, and Armenians: that the 'river[29] ſhould be dried up: that the city ſhould be 'taken in the time[30] of a feaſt, while her mighty men 'were drunken; which accordingly came to paſs, when 'Belſhazzar and all his thouſand princes, who were 'drunk with him at the feaſt, were[31] ſlain by Cyrus's 'ſoldiers. Alſo it was particularly foretold, that God '*would make*[32] the country of Babylon *a poſſeſſion for* 'the bittern, and pools of water; which was accordingly 'fulfilled by the overflowing and drowning of it, on the 'breaking down of the great dam in order to take the 'city. Could the correſpondence of theſe events with 'the predictions be the reſult of chance? But *ſuppoſe* 'theſe predictions were forged after the event: can the 'following ones alſo have been written after the event? 'or, with any reaſon, be aſcribed to chance? *The wild* 'beaſts[33] *of the deſert—ſhall dwell there, and the owls* 'ſhall dwell therein: and it ſhall be NO MORE inhabited 'for EVER.—*They ſhall not*[34] *take of thee a ſtone for a* 'corner,—*but thou ſhalt be deſolate for* EVER, *ſaith the* 'Lord—*Babylon*[35], *the glory of kingdoms,—ſhall be as* 'when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah: it ſhall 'NEVER be inhabited, neither ſhall it be dwelt in from 'generation to generation: neither ſhall the Arabian 'pitch tent there, neither ſhall the ſhepherds make their 'fold there: but wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall lie there. 'Concerning Tyre, the prediction is no leſs remarkable: 'I will[36] make thee like the top of a rock; thou ſhalt be a 'place to ſpread nets upon; thou ſhalt be built NO 'MORE.—*The merchants*[37] *among the people ſhall hiſs*

[29] Jer. l. 38. li. 36.
[30] Jer. li. 39, 57.
[31] Cyropædia, lib. 7.
[32] Iſ. xiv. 23.
[33] Jer. l. 39.
[34] Jer. li. 26.
[35] Iſ. xiii. 19, 20, 21.
[36] Ezek. xxvi. 14.
[37] Ezek. xxvii. 36.

'at

'*at thee, thou ſhalt be a terror, and* NEVER *ſhall be any* '*more. All they*[38] *that know thee among the people ſhall* '*be aſtoniſhed at thee*[39].'

'You actually ſee the completion of many of the pro-'phecies' of ſcripture, ſays bp. Newton, 'in the ſtate of 'men and things around you, and you have the prophe-'cies themſelves recorded in books, which books have 'been read in public aſſemblies theſe 1700 or 2000 years, 'have been diſperſed into ſeveral countries, have been 'tranſlated into ſeveral languages, and quoted and com-'mented upon by different authors of different ages and 'nations, ſo that there is no room to ſuſpect ſo much as a 'poſſibility of forgery or illuſion.' And it may be added, that 'the more you know of ancient and modern times, 'and the farther you ſearch into the truth of hiſtory, the 'more you will be ſatisfied of the truth of pro-'phecy[40].'

'Jeſus himſelf,' ſays the biſhop of Worceſter, 'ap-'peals to the *ſpirit of prophecy*, as bearing witneſs to his 'perſon and diſpenſation. *Search the ſcriptures*, ſays he 'to the Jews,—*they are they which teſtify of me*[41].— 'How generally they did ſo, he explained at large in 'that remarkable converſation with two of his diſciples 'after his reſurrection, when, *beginning at Moſes and* 'ALL *the prophets, he expounded unto them in* ALL *the* '*ſcriptures*[42] the things concerning himſelf.' Accordingly 'the argument from prophecy is not to be formed 'from the conſideration of ſingle prophecies, but from 'all the prophecies taken together, and conſidered as 'making one ſyſtem; in which, from the mutual de-

[38] Ezek. xxviii. 19.

[39] A Diſc. concerning the Being and Attributes of God, and the Truth and Certainty of the Chriſtian Revelation, 9th ed. p. 426.

[40] Vol. III. p. 420, 423. [41] John v. 39.

[42] Luke xxiv. 27.

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'pendance and connexion of its parts, preceding pro-
'phecies prepare and illuſtrate thoſe which follow, and
'theſe, again, reflect light on the foregoing: juſt as, in
'any philoſophical ſyſtem, that which ſhews the ſolidity
'of it is the harmony and correſpondence of the whole;
'not the application of it in particular inſtances. Hence,
'though the evidence be but ſmall, from the completion
'of any one prophecy, taken ſeparately, yet, that evi-
'dence being always ſomething, the amount of the whole
'evidence, reſulting from a great number of prophecies,
'all relative to the ſame deſign, may be conſiderable;
'like many ſcattered rays, which, though each be weak
'in itſelf, yet, concentered into one point, ſhall form a
'ſtrong light, and ſtrike the ſenſe very powerfully[43].'

The paſſages that follow relate to prophecy in general.

If the infidel object againſt the divine original of the predictions of ſcripture, that there is much of darkneſs and of difficulty belonging to them, let it be remembered, that this objection is far from being peculiar to prophecy. It does, ſays Dr. Blair, in his ſermon on our Imperfect Knowledge of a Future State, plainly appear 'to be the plan of the Deity, in all his diſpenſations to 'mix light with darkneſs, evidence with uncertainty. 'Whatever the reaſons of this procedure be, the fact 'is undeniable.' Indeed 'upon the ſuppoſition of im-'mortality, this life is no other than the childhood of 'exiſtence; and the meaſures of our knowledge muſt 'needs be proportioned to ſuch a ſtate[44].'

Since natural religion is by no means exempt from difficulties, it is, in truth, far from being reaſonable to expect, that none ſhould be found in revealed religion. With reſpect to thoſe which attend the Jewiſh and Chriſtian revelations, it may, ſays Dr. Prieſtley, be remarked,

[43] Hurd, vol. I. p. 35, 47. [44] Serm. vol. I. p. 88, 100.

that

that the queſtion is not, whether any of the particulars I have been conſidering, '*ſeparately taken*, be likely or 'unlikely to come from God, but whether *the whole ſyſ-* '*tem*, attended with ſuch difficulties, may be divine. 'If it were poſſible that any perſon ſhould be aſked, *a* '*priori*, whether it was probable, that, under the go- 'vernment of a wiſe and good being, an innocent child 'ſhould inherit the diſeaſes, poverty, and vices of its 'parent; or whether no diſtinction would be made be- 'tween the righteous and the wicked in war, peſtilence, 'famine, or earthquakes, he would certainly anſwer it 'was not probable; though when he ſhould come to 'know, and attentively conſider the whole ſyſtem, of 'which ſuch events make a part, he might be ſatisfied, 'that it was the reſult of perfect wiſdom, directed by in- 'finite goodneſs; and even that a ſcheme more favour- 'able to happineſs or virtue could not have been 'formed; and the time may come, when we ſhall know 'and acknowledge the ſame with reſpect to the *extraor-* '*dinary*, that we do with reſpect to the *ordinary*, diſ- 'penſations of the Divine Being[45].'

Many enquirers into the prophetic pages of ſcripture have, ſays bp. Hurd, been miſled by the 'folly of com- 'menting on prophecy by the falſe lights of the imagina- 'tion.—It is true that prophecy, in the very idea of that 'term, at leaſt in the ſcriptural idea of it, implies the di- 'vine agency; and that, exerted not merely in giving 'the faculty itſelf, but in directing all its operations. 'Yet I know not how it is, that, when men addreſs 'themſelves to the ſtudy of the prophetic ſcriptures, they 'are apt to let this ſo neceſſary idea ſlip out of their 'minds; and to diſcourſe upon them juſt as they would 'or might do, on the ſuppoſition that the prophet was

[45] Inſtitutes, vol. II. p. 88.

'left

'left at liberty to diſpenſe this gift, in all reſpects, as he 'ſhould think proper. No wonder then, that they 'ſhould miſconceive of its character, and entertain very 'different notions about the exerciſe of this power from 'what the ſcriptures give them of it.'

If the power and the mode of predicting were entirely at the diſpoſal of man, 'it is likely enough that the pro-'phet, for his own credit, or for what he might fancy to 'be the ſole end of prophecy, might chuſe' to predict future events 'with all poſſible clearneſs, and in ſuch ſort 'that obſtinacy itſelf muſt ſee and admit the completion 'of them: but' if, on the contrary, 'the prophet was 'only the miniſter and inſtrument of the divine counſels, 'in the high office committed to him,' thoſe who aſſume it as a principle, 'that divine prophecy muſt be delivered 'with the utmoſt clearneſs and perſpicuity, and fulfilled 'with irreſiſtible evidence,—will do well to anſwer, at 'their leiſure, the following queſtions. How do they 'know in what manner, and with what circumſtances, it 'was fit for divine wiſdom to diſpenſe a knowledge of 'futurity to mankind? How can they previouſly de-'termine the degree of evidence, with which a predic-'tion muſt be either given or fulfilled? What aſſurance 'have they, that no reaſonable ends could be ſerved by 'prophecies, expreſſed with ſome obſcurity, and accom-'pliſhed in a ſenſe much below what may ſeem neceſſary 'to unavoidable conviction? Can they even pretend, 'on any clear principles of reaſon, that very important 'ends, perhaps the moſt important, may not be anſwered 'by that mode of conveyance, which appears to them ſo 'exceptionable? Can they, in a word, determine be-'fore-hand, I do not ſay with certainty, but with any 'colour of probability, what *muſt* be the character of di-'vine prophecy, when they know not the reaſon, moſt 'undoubtedly not *all* the reaſons, why it is given, and

'have

'have even no right to demand that it ſhould be given at 'all? Till theſe, and other queſtions of the like ſort, be 'pertinently anſwered, it muſt be in vain to cenſure the 'ways of providence, as not correſponding to our im-'perfect and ſhort-ſighted views[46].'

'The ill ſucceſs of men in explaining prophecies of 'events, not yet come to paſs, can,' ſays the bp. of Worceſter in another place, 'in no degree diſcredit thoſe 'prophecies, unleſs it be eſſential to this ſort of revela-'tion to be ſo clearly propoſed, as that it may and muſt 'be *perfectly underſtood*, before thoſe events happen; 'the contrary of which I have' ſhewn. 'The very 'idea of prophecy is that of *a light ſhining in a dark* '*place*[47]: and a place is not *dark*, if we have light 'enough to diſcern diſtinctly and fully *every remote cor-*'*ner of it*. But the thing ſpeaks itſelf. For to what 'end is the prediction delivered in obſcure and enig-'matic terms, if the purpoſe of the inſpirer was, that the 'ſubject of the prediction ſhould be immediately, and in 'all its circumſtances, preciſely apprehended? Why, 'then, is any diſtinction made between Prophecy and 'Hiſtory? *The mode of writing* clearly demonſtrates, 'that ſomething, for a time at leaſt, was meant to be 'concealed from us[48].'

It has been objected, as a circumſtance altogether ſtrange and improbable, that ſo ſignal a gift as that of prophecy ſhould have been beſtowed upon the Jews, a nation ſo obſcure, inconſiderable, unenlightened. On this point alſo I quote from bp. Hurd. To prove the truth of Chriſtianity, and to foreſhew the advent of the Meſſiah, with the revolutions and the eſtabliſhment of his kingdom; was, ſays the prelate, the purpoſe of

[46] Hurd, vol. I. p. 3, 4, 15, 18.
[47] 2 Pet. i. 19. [48] Hurd, vol. II. p. 66.

prophecy. 'It was therefore confined to one nation, 'purpoſely ſet apart to preſerve and atteſt the oracles of 'God; and to exhibit, in their public records and whole 'hiſtory, the proofs and credentials of an amazing diſ-'penſation, which God had decreed to accompliſh in 'Chriſt Jeſus.—The *teſtimony* thought fit to be given 'was not one or two prophecies only, but a *ſcheme* of 'prophecy, gradually prepared and continued through a 'large tract of time. But how could ſuch a ſcheme be 'executed, or rather how could it clearly be ſeen that 'there was ſuch a ſcheme in view, if ſome *one* people 'had not been made the repoſitory, and, in part, the in-'ſtrument of the divine counſels in regard to Jeſus; 'ſome *one* people, I ſay, among whom we might trace 'the ſeveral parts of ſuch a ſcheme, and obſerve the de-'pendance they had on each other?—For had the notices 'concerning the redeemer been diſperſed indifferently 'among *all* nations, where had been that uncorrupt and 'unſuſpected teſtimony, that continuity of evidence, 'that unbroken chain of prediction, all tending, by juſt 'degrees, to the ſame point, which we now contemplate 'with wonder in the Jewiſh ſcriptures? It is not then 'that the reſt of the world was overlooked in the plan 'of God's providence; but that he ſaw fit to employ the 'miniſtry of *one* people: this laſt, I ſay, and not the 'other, is the reaſon why the divine communications 'concerning Chriſt were appropriated to the Jews. "Yes, but ſome one of the greater nations had better "been intruſted with that charge." This circumſtance, 'I allow, might have ſtruck a ſuperficial obſerver more: 'but could the integrity of the prophetic ſcheme have 'been more diſcernible amidſt the multiform and in-'finitely involved tranſactions of a mighty people, than 'in the ſimpler ſtory of this ſmall Jewiſh family? Or 'would the hand or work of God, who loves to mani-'feſt

'feſt himſelf by weak inſtruments, have been more con-
'ſpicuous in that deſignation?—The benefits of pro-
'phecy, though conveyed by one nation, would finally
'redound to all; and the more *effectually*, we have ſeen,
'for being conveyed by one nation. May we not con-
'clude then (having the *fact*, as I ſaid, to reaſon upon)
'that, to obtain ſuch purpoſe, it was fit to ſelect a pecu-
'liar people? And, if thus much be acknowledged, it
'will hardly be thought a queſtion of much moment,
'though no anſwer could be given to it, why the Jews
'had that excluſive privilege conferred upon them[49].'

It has been urged, by the objectors againſt prophecy, that the pointing out of future events is to be ſatisfactorily accounted for by that ſuperior degree of ſagacity, by which ſome men are ſeen to be diſtinguiſhed; and that conjectures, as experience informs us, will not unfrequently be realized by chance and a felicity of coincidence. This objection bp. Hurd has anſwered at conſiderable length. Much as I have quoted from this able writer, I am unwilling to omit the inſertion of a part of his reply. That the completion of two or three predictions, though they perfectly correſpond to the events to which they are applied, does not infer a certainty of inſpiration, the biſhop of Worceſter readily admits. If, however, ſays the prelate, 'the prophecies in the Old
'and New Teſtament be *very numerous*, and if thoſe
'prophecies, ſo many of them, I mean, as are alleged in
'this controverſy with unbelievers, have had a reaſon-
'able completion,—it muſt appear highly credible and
'probable, that ſo numerous prophecies, ſo fulfilled, had
'not their origin from human conjecture, nor their ac-
'compliſhment from what we call *chance*. For mere
'conjecture is not uſually ſo happy; nor chance ſo con-

[49] Vol. I. p. 75—79.

'ſtant. Farther ſtill; if the ſcriptural prophecies have 'been completed in numerous inſtances, and if in *no* 'inſtance whatſoever can it be clearly ſhewn, that they 'have failed in the event, the preſumption is ſtill 'ſtronger that ſuch coincidence could not be fortuitous; 'and a material difference between ſcriptural prophecy 'and pagan divination is, at the ſame time, pointed out. 'For, that, in the multitude of pretended oracles in the 'days of paganiſm, ſome few only ſhould come to paſs, 'while the generality of them fell to the ground, may 'well be the ſport of *fortune*. But, that very many pro-'phecies, recorded in our ſcriptures, have had an evi-'dent completion, when not *one* of all thoſe, there re-'corded, can be convicted of impoſture, muſt ſurely be 'the work of deſign.' But the prophecies of ſcripture are not merely *numerous*. A great number of them are alſo eminently *minute* and *circumſtantial*. 'On the 'whole, the general evidence for the truth of Chriſ-'tianity, as reſulting from the ſcriptural prophecies, 'though poſſibly not *that*, which ſome may wiſh or ex-'pect, is yet apparently very conſiderable. *Some* coin-'cidences might fall out, by accident; and *more* might 'be imagined. But when *ſo many*, and *ſuch* prophecies 'are brought together, and compared with their correſ-'ponding events, it becomes ridiculous (becauſe the ef-'fect is in no degree proportioned to the cauſe) to ſay of 'ſuch coincidences, that they are the creatures of *fancy*, 'or could have been the work of *chance*[50].'

'The truth of our religion, like the truth of common 'matters, is,' ſays bp. Butler, 'to be judged of by all the 'evidence taken together. And unleſs the whole ſeries 'of things which may be alleged in this argument, and 'every particular thing in it, can reaſonably be ſuppoſed

[50] Vol. I. p. 107, 120.

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'to have been *by accident*; (for here the ſtreſs of the 'argument for Chriſtianity lies;) then is the truth of it 'proved.—It is obvious, how much advantage, the na-'ture of this evidence gives to thoſe perſons, who attack 'Chriſtianity, eſpecially in converſation. For it is *eaſy* 'to ſhew, in a ſhort and lively manner, that ſuch and 'ſuch things are liable to objection; that this, and ano-'ther thing, is of little weight in itſelf; but *impoſſible* to 'ſhew, in like manner, the united force of the whole ar-'gument in one view[51].'

'The following qualities,' ſays Dr. Johnſton of Holywood, 'ſeem inſeparable from prophecy; at leaſt they 'are found in every prophecy which I have conſidered; 'and appear to me to be cloſely connected with the very 'nature of prophecy, 1ſt. That the prophecies are ex-'preſſed in dark, but never in contradictory language. '2d. That, BEFORE THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT, THE 'GREAT OUTLINES OF THE EVENTS MAY BE DIS-'COVERED WITH CERTAINTY; but not all the mi-'nute circumſtances. 3d. That, the nearer the time of 'their accompliſhment approaches, more of the predic-'tions may be known.—And 4th, that neither before the 'event ſhall the general meaning of the prophecy, nor 'after the event ſhall the full meaning of it, appear to 'the generality of mankind; but they ſhall appear to 'thoſe perſons only, who ſtudy it, with competent 'knowledge, uprightneſs, and diligence[52].'

That there are difficulties in the prophets, at preſent inexplicable to the upright and the diligent, as well as to the careleſs and the ignorant, is on all hands admitted. But ſurely the admiſſion of this fact does not neceſſarily lead to the concluſion, that theſe difficulties will never be removed, either by the fulfilment of the events pre-

[51] Butler's Analogy, p. 401. [52] On the Apoc. vol. I. p. 6.

dicted, or by the ſucceſsful induſtry and the united talents of ſucceeding critics. Four or five centuries ago, antecedently to the reſurrection of letters, how extremely little was known of the Jewiſh or the Chriſtian prophets, with any degree of accuracy or certainty, in compariſon of what now is known! Is there not then ground to believe, that a renewal of the ſame efforts will be productive of ſimilar effects? Is there not reaſon, not merely to hope, but confidently to conclude, that many of thoſe obſcurities, which now in a conſiderable degree darken the face of prophecy, will be cleared up by the acumen and reſearch of the commentators who ſhall hereafter appear; and that future ages will conſequently poſſeſs a very ſuperior acquaintance with the prophetic ſcriptures, as well as with every other ſpecies of knowledge?

Dr. Hartley, in the ſecond part of his *Obſervations on Man*, enters upon the evidences of the prophetic ſcriptures. That '*the degree of obſcurity, which is found in the prophecies of the ſcriptures, is not ſo great as to invalidate the foregoing evidences for their divine authority: but, on the contrary, is itſelf an indirect teſtimony in their favour*,' is the thirty-firſt propoſition of that work. In order to prove this, this celebrated phyſician obſerves, '*Firſt*, that there are a ſufficient number of prophecies, whoſe interpretation is certain, clear, and preciſe, to ſhew that their agreement with the events predicted is far above the powers of chance, or human foreſight. But for the proof of this point, which takes in a great compaſs of literature, I muſt,' ſays Dr. Hartley, 'refer to the writers who have treated it in detail. And as thoſe, who have examined this point with accuracy and impartiality, do, as I preſume, univerſally agree to the poſition here laid down, ſo thoſe who have not done it, can have no pretence for aſſerting the contrary;

'trary; this being an hiſtorical matter, which is to be de-
'termined as others of a like kind, viz. by the hiſtorical
'evidences.—*Secondly*, that, even in the types and pro-
'phecies where interpreters differ from each other, the
'differences are often ſo inconſiderable, and the agree-
'ments ſo general,—as to exclude both chance and hu-
'man-foreſight, i. e. to infer a divine communication.—
'*Thirdly*, I obſerve that thoſe types and prophecies,
'whoſe interpretation is ſo obſcure, that interpreters
'have not been able to diſcover any probable applica-
'tion, cannot any ways invalidate the evidence ariſing
'from the reſt. They are analogous to thoſe parts of
'the works of nature, whoſe uſes, and ſubſerviency to
'the reſt, are not yet underſtood. And as no one calls
'in queſtion the evidences of deſign, which appear in
'many parts of the human body, becauſe the uſes of
'others are not yet known; ſo the interpretations of pro-
'phecy, which are clearly or probably made out, remain
'the ſame evidence of deſign, notwithſtanding that un-
'ſurmountable difficulties may hitherto attend many
'other parts[53] of the prophetic writings. *Fourthly*, it is
'predicted in the prophecies, that *in the latter times*
'great multitudes will be converted to the Chriſtian
'faith; whereas thoſe who preach or *propheſy* during
'the great apoſtaſy, ſhall be able to do this only in an
'obſcure, imperfect manner, and convert but a few.
'Now the paſt and preſent obſcurity of prophecy agrees
'remarkably with this prediction; and the opening,
'which is already made, ſince the revival of letters, in

[53] 'The obſcurity or unintelligibleneſs of one part of a prophecy, does 'not, in any degree, invalidate the proof of foreſight, ariſing from the ap-'pearing completion of thoſe other parts which are underſtood. For the 'caſe is evidently the ſame, as if thoſe parts, which are not underſtood, 'were loſt, or not written at all, or written in an unknown tongue.' Butler's Analogy, 1750, p. 366.

'applying the prophecies to the events, ſeems to preſage, 'that *the latter times* are now approaching; and that by 'the more full diſcovery of the true meaning of the pro- 'phetic writings, and of their aptneſs to ſignify the 'events predicted, there will be ſuch an acceſſion of evi- 'dence to the divine authority of the ſcriptures, as none 'but the wilfully ignorant, the profligate, and the obdu- 'rate can withſtand. It is therefore a confirmation of 'the prophetic writings, that, by the obſcurity of one 'part of them, a way ſhould be prepared for effecting 'that glorious converſion of all nations, which is pre- 'dicted in others, in the time and manner in which it is 'predicted[54].'

Perhaps the following remarks of Dr. Worthington are not altogether inapplicable to the concluſion of the preceding extract from Dr. Hartley. Time may 'ope- 'rate, and often doth, on the ſide of both probability and 'credibility. It is a proverbial ſaying, that time brings 'every thing to light. It often detects frauds and im- 'poſtures, removes falſe colourings and diſguiſes, and 'overcomes prejudices, which obſcured the evidence, 'and kept the mind in ſuſpence from giving its aſſent. 'It may bring new proofs to light, which lay hid before; 'and what was no more than barely probable, or cre- 'dible, may become abſolutely certain. Sir Iſaac New- 'ton had made a probable conjecture, concerning the form 'of the earth: what he rendered probable, the French 'geometricians have ſince demonſtrated to be certain. 'Things incredible to ſome perſons and ages, have been 'known to others for certain truths. The late diſcove- 'ries in philoſophy, and the reports of travellers, are full 'of inſtances of this kind; and what the philoſopher 'knows for certain, ſhocks the faith of the peaſant.

[54] On Man, 1749, vol. II. p. 157.

'Apply

'Apply this to revelation. At the firſt preaching of the 'goſpel, it was *thought a thing incredible, that God 'ſhould raiſe the dead*, Acts xxvi. 8. And Paul ſeemed, 'to the men of Athens, to be *a ſetter-forth of ſtrange 'Gods, becauſe he preached unto them Jeſus and the re-'ſurrection*, ch. xvii. 18, and yet Jeſus and the reſurrec-'tion were ſoon afterwards believed in by great numbers 'there and elſewhere[55].'

Of the importance of contemplating, frequently and accurately, thoſe arguments in ſupport of revelation, which are derived from prophecy, Chriſtians, I apprehend, are not in general ſufficiently apprized. '*Faith*,' ſays an eminent writer, 'is not one abſolute and deter-'minate thing, but it admits of *degrees*; proceeding from 'a ſimple *aſſent* to a propoſition, which ariſes from a 'bare preponderancy of the arguments in favour of it, 'and advancing by the moſt inſenſible gradation, to that '*fulneſs of perſuaſion*, which ariſes from the perception 'of the greateſt clearneſs and ſtrength of the evidence 'for it. The paſſions and affections, if they be at all 'moved by a bare aſſent, will be extremely languid, 'though the thing itſelf be of the greateſt moment; 'whereas a full perſuaſion of the reality of an intereſting 'object excites the moſt vigorous and fervent emotions. 'The difference of the impreſſion they make upon the 'mind is properly compared to the effect of an object, 'placed at a very great, or a very ſmall diſtance. If any 'thing in the conduct of life depend upon belief, we 'ſhall, in the former caſe, be hardly influenced by it at 'all; a very ſmall motive being ſufficient to overpower 'the effect of ſo ſuperficial a faith; at beſt we ſhall be 'irreſolute and inconſtant; whereas, in the latter caſe, 'we ſhall be determined to vigorous and immediate ac-

[55] Vol I. p. 62.

'tion.

'tion. It is, therefore, of the greateſt conſequence, not 'only that unbelievers be made converts to the Chriſtian 'faith, but that the faith of believers themſelves be 'ſtrengthened, and they be thereby converted from 'merely *nominal* into *real* Chriſtians.—Now faith is *in-* '*creaſed* by the very ſame means by which it is firſt '*generated*, viz. by an attention to the proper evidences, 'and a frequent contemplation of the object of it. Thoſe 'perſons therefore, who call themſelves Chriſtians, and 'who muſt be ſuppoſed to wiſh to feel and act as be-'comes Chriſtians, ſhould ſtudy the evidences of their 'religion.—They ſhould both frequently read the ſcrip-'tures, and alſo other books, which tend to prove their 'truth, and illuſtrate their contents[56].'

Having ſo long confined the attention of the reader to general remarks alone, I ſhall ſhortly again bring before his view ſome illuſtrations of particular prophecies: having had an opportunity, on the ſubject of the preſent chapter, of ſelecting from a more than ordinary number of excellent writers, I ſhall abſtain from introducing any obſervations of my own.

The preſent chapter conſiſts almoſt entirely of extracts. If this circumſtance be conceived to call for an apology, I have only to obſerve, that it ſeemed important to the cauſe of truth and to the intereſts of revelation, that all the principal arguments on the credibility of prophecy, arguments which have already been clearly ſtated by different writers, ſhould *be brought together*[57] *into a tolerably narrow compaſs*; and that I was unacquainted with any work, in which this uſeful taſk had been com-

[56] Prieſtley's Inſtitutes, vol. I. p. 168.

[57] At the ſame time it may not be improper to obſerve, that thoſe general remarks on prophecy, which are introduced in the ivth chapter of the preſent work, occur not again in the xixth; and therefore theſe two chapters may, with propriety, be peruſed in connexion.

pletely

pletely performed. And though there may occaſionally, in the courſe of the extracts, have been ſomewhat of repetition, it may be remarked, that the ideas repeated are generally ſufficiently important, to deſerve to be brought before the mind again and again, and to be placed in a variety of lights.

## CHAPTER XX.

### ON THE MONARCHICAL IMAGE AND THE TEN-HORNED BEAST IN DANIEL.

THE predictions, relative to modern times, which occur in chapters ii. and vii. of Daniel, are peculiarly worthy of examination; for they are more than uſually clear, and will reflect a light on the apocalyptical prophecies[1]. But, previouſly to entering on a brief examination of them, I ſhall cite a few ſhort teſtimonies of writers reſpecting this diſtinguiſhed prophet.

With reſpect to the authenticity of the book of Daniel, 'there is,' ſays bp. Newton, 'all the external evi-'dence that can well be had or deſired in a caſe of this 'nature; not only the teſtimony of the whole Jewiſh 'church and nation, who have conſtantly received this 'book as canonical; but of Joſephus particularly, who 'commends him as the greateſt of the prophets; of the 'Jewiſh Targums and Talmuds, which frequently cite 'and appeal to his authority; of St. Paul and St. John, 'who have copied many of his prophecies; of our Sa-

[1] 'Comparing ſcripture with ſcripture is the beſt way to underſtand 'both the one and the other,' bp. Newton, vol. I. p. 494.

'viour

'viour himſelf, who citeth his words, and ſtyleth him '*Daniel the prophet*;' and 'of ancient hiſtorians, who 'relate many of the ſame tranſactions.—Nor is the inter-'nal leſs powerful and convincing than the external evi-'dence; for the language, the ſtyle, the manner of writ-'ing, and all other internal marks and characters, are 'perfectly agreeable to that age; and he appears plainly 'and undeniably to have been a prophet by the exact 'accompliſhment of his prophecies, as well thoſe which 'have already been fulfilled, as thoſe which are now ful-'filling in the world[2].'

Dr. Samuel Chandler, in ſpeaking of Daniel, ſays, 'upon account of his extraordinary piety and wiſdom, 'he is taken notice of and commended by Ezekiel[3], 'who was his fellow prophet and contemporary.—The 'purity of the language in which the book is written, 'both of the Chaldee and Hebrew[4], is an undeniable 'argument of its great antiquity.' For 'ſince every lan-'guage, from the very nature of it, is in a conſtant flux, 'and in every age deviating from what it was in the for-'mer; the purity of Daniel's language makes it evident, 'that it muſt be written before the purity of thoſe lan-'guages was loſt, i. e. about the time when Ezekiel's 'Daniel lived and flouriſhed[5].'

Porphyry, an heathen philoſopher of the third century, and a pupil of Longinus, who wrote an elaborate work in fifteen books againſt Chriſtianity, did, as we are informed by Jerom, object againſt the character of

[2] Vol. II. p. 16. [3] XIV. 14; xxviii. 3.

[4] 'This prophecy is writ partly in Hebrew, and partly in Chaldee: 'for which this reaſon may be aſſigned; that thoſe parts of it in which the 'Babylonian empire was concerned were writ in that language, viz. from 'ch. ii. 4. to the end of the viith chapter: a great part of which was pro-'bably entered into their public regiſters.' Mr. Lowth's Intr. to Dan.

[5] Vindic. of Dan, p. 61, 63.

Daniel,

Daniel, that he was criminal in accepting with ſo much readineſs the honours conferred upon him at Babylon. 'But there is no ground,' ſays the excellent Lardner, 'for ſuch a cenſure: Daniel was guilty of no mean compliances: he aſcribed all his wiſdom to God; and upon every occaſion preſerved his integrity without blemiſh, and openly profeſſed his zeal for true religion, and the worſhip of God according to the directions of the law of Moſes. It was not decent for him to refuſe the honours beſtowed by a great king, when no ſinful compliances were exacted; and when he might, in the high ſtation to which he was advanced, both promote the intereſt of true religion, and the welfare of his people in a ſtrange country. Daniel does not appear to have been fond of worldly honours. When Belſhazzar made him great promiſes, he anſwered: *Let thy gifts be to thyſelf, and give thy rewards to another*[6].'

A learned anonymous writer, in his obſervations on the book of Daniel, ſays, 'I think it no inconſiderable argument, that it has not been foiſted in upon the world by Chriſtian or Jewiſh zealots, that parts of it have continued ſo long in obſcurity, and now, in this age, are gradually explained. Had any impoſition been deſigned, theſe pretended oracles would have been underſtood at the firſt moment of their publication, as well as now; and would not have waited for elucidation till this time, ſo long after the views of a falſe prophet muſt have been at an end[7].'

'Our bleſſed Saviour,' ſays Dr. Apthorp, 'has ſo aſſerted the authority of the prophecies of Daniel, as to reſt his own veracity on their truth[8];' and it is of

[6] Dan. v. 17. Lardner's Works, vol. VIII. p. 203.

[7] *Commentaries and Eſſays*, vol. I. ſignature *Synergus*, p. 508.

[8] Vol. I. p. 237.

Daniel

Daniel that Sir I. Newton says, 'to reject his prophecies, 'is to reject the Christian religion. For this religion is 'founded upon his prophecy concerning the Messiah[9].'

'I conceive Daniel,' says Mede, 'to be *Apocalypsis* '*Contracta*, and the apocalypse *Daniel Explicate*, in that 'where both treat about the same subject; namely what 'was revealed to Daniel concerning the Fourth King-'dom, but *summatim* and in the gross, is shewed to St. 'John *particulatim*, with the distinction and order of 'the several fates and circumstances[10].' 'The apoca-'lypse of John,' says Sir I. Newton, 'is written in the 'same style and language with the prophecies of Daniel, 'and hath the same relation to them, which they have to 'one another, so that all of them together make up but 'one complete prophecy[11].'

Of the predictions in ch. ii. and ch. vii. of Daniel such is the preciseness, that they admit not of two interpretations[12].' That they refer to a remote period, the prophet has himself declared, telling us in the former of those chapters (v. 28), that they related to *what shall be in the* LATTER *days*.

In chapter ii. it is predicted, that the great *Image*, symbolical of the monarchies of the world, shall be overthrown and destroyed; and (v. 34 and 42) that its *Ten Toes* shall be shattered to atoms. 'The great idol of 'Daniel was,' says a valuable writer, 'very properly 'used as a representation of the grand imposture under

[9] P. 25. [10] P. 964.

[11] P. 254. With respect to Sir I. Newton's character as a critic and a theologian, the testimony of an adversary may be cited. 'The first of 'philosophers,' says Mr. Gibbon, 'was deeply skilled in critical and theo-'logical studies.' Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. VIII. p. 272.

[12] Dr. Sykes, speaking of chapters ii. and vii. of Daniel, says, 'the 'prophetic style is plain and easy; and the terms such as will admit of very 'little, if any debate.' Eff. on the Tr. of the Chr. Rel. p. 12.

'living

'living princes, who were worſhipped as Gods, which 'was to continue to deceive the whole world from 'Daniel's time forward.' And ſpeaking of St. John's prediction, that men ſhall *worſhip* the ten-horned Beaſt, he ſays, '*worſhipping*, as I have already ſhewed, rightly 'expreſſes that unreaſonable idolatrous reſpect, which 'mankind have in all ages ſhewn to abſolute princes, by 'treating them as Gods[13].' And it is obſerved by bp. Chandler, that human figures, in early times, were, 'as 'the remains in ancient coins ſtill ſhew, the uſual ſym-'bols, whereby cities and people were known. And 'the metal they were made of, and the colours that 'adorned them (of which the herald's art preſerves yet 'ſome traces), were farther marks to diſtinguiſh them 'from each other[14].'

The demolition of the metallic image is repreſented under a well-known figure, that of *a ſtone*, which, being *cut out without hands, ſmote the image on his feet, and brake them to pieces*; which prophecy conveys a ſimilar meaning to a paſſage in the apocalypſe already expatiated upon, that *the Lamb ſhall overcome the Ten Kings*. '*The Ten Toes* of the image,' ſays Mr. Lowth, when ſpeaking of the Roman empire, 'ſignify the Ten Kings, 'who were in after-times to divide this kingdom among 'themſelves denoted by *the Ten* Horns of this fourth 'Beaſt, mentioned in ch. vii. 7, compared with Rev. 'xvii. 12.' By the ſtone being a ſpecies of mineral altogether different from that of which the image was compoſed, it was, ſays bp. Chandler, 'implied, that this

[13] An Eſſ. on Script. Proph. and particularly on the Three Periods of Daniel, 1724, p. 58, 84. This writer expreſſes his expectation, that the year 1790 would be a memorable epocha, diſtinguiſhed by great and momentous events; but his expectation was grounded on an erroneous computation of the periods of Daniel. See p. 158.

[14] Def. of Chr. p. 95.

* new

'new kingdom ſhould be not only different in number, 'or a diſtinct empire, but of another nature from that of 'the image[15].' Like an unſhapen ſtone, alike deſtitute of poliſh and of magnitude, the diſpenſation of Jeſus was to be principally propagated by men of the plaineſt manners, unadorned by learning, and undignified by rank; and, at its firſt riſe, it was to make a ſmall and comparatively inconſiderable progreſs. 'The ſtone cut out 'without hands,' ſays Mat. Henry, 'repreſented the 'kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt.' It is ſaid to be '*cut out of* '*the mountain without hands*, for it ſhould be neither 'raiſed, nor ſupported by human power or policy; no 'viſible hand ſhould act in the ſetting it up, but it ſhould 'be done inviſibly by the Spirit of the Lord of Hoſts: 'this was *the Stone which the builders refuſed*, becauſe it 'was not cut out by their hands, but it is now become '*the Head Stone of the corner*.' Mat. Henry alſo obſerves, that Chriſt himſelf declares (Mat. xxi. 44), with a reference to this prophecy[16], that *on whomſoever this Stone ſhall fall, it will grind him to powder*. And to whom does the prophecy of Daniel relate? Unqueſtionably to the Ten antichriſtian Monarchies, which are eſtabliſhed, ſomewhere or other, in the European quarter of the globe. Let tyrants read this aſſeveration of our Saviour, and tremble.

In v. 32 and 33 it is declared, that *this image's head was of fine gold, his breaſt and his arms of ſilver, his belly and his thighs of braſs, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay*. Now the commentators prove at large, that the golden part of the monarchical

[15] Def. of Chr. p. 97.

[16] That our Saviour in his diſcourſes had theſe prophecies of Daniel very frequently in view, Dr. Sykes has proved in his Eſſ. on the Chr. Rel. p. 30, 79.

image

image repreſented the empire of the Aſſyrians, the ſilver that of the Perſians, the braſs that of the Greeks, and the iron and the clay that of the princes of the Roman empire. It was on account of its great ſtrength, as the prophet himſelf informs us, that the fourth empire was compared to the laſt of theſe metals. *And the fourth kingdom ſhall be ſtrong as iron; foraſmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and ſubdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all theſe, ſhall it break in pieces and bruiſe*[16].

'Daniel's own interpretation is,' ſays bp. Chandler, 'ſo plain, that no unbiaſſed perſon can eaſily miſtake in 'the empires he propheſies of. He is expreſs in the 'number. There ſhall be *four kingdoms*; and he counts 'the Babylonian, then in being, for the *firſt*[17]. Hiſtory 'tells us, the Medo-Perſian broke, and ſucceeded the 'Babylonian. The Greek empire came into the place 'of the Perſian by conqueſt, and is therefore the *third*. 'No hiſtorian ever confined the Greek empire to Alex-'ander's perſon, or made a diſtinct empire of the four 'kingdoms, that aroſe upon his death. The Greek was 'deſtroyed in its two lateſt branches, that of the Seleu-'cides and Ptolemies by the Roman, which is conſe-'quently the fourth kingdom, and anſwers in every 'reſpect to its *iron* character[18].'

Since it is ſaid in v. 34, that *the ſtone ſmote the image*; and in v. 35, that *then was the iron, the clay, the braſs, the ſilver, and the gold, broken to pieces* TOGETHER[19], *and became like the chaff of the ſummer threſhing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was*

[16] V. 40. [17] V. 38. [18] Def. of Chr. p. 99.

[19] In v. 45 it is again ſaid, that *the ſtone, which was cut out of the mountain without hands, brake in pieces the iron, the braſs, the clay, the ſilver, and the gold.*

*found for them*[20]; we muſt of neceſſity aſſent to the obſervation of bp. Hurd, that 'the four kingdoms of 'Daniel—form a prophetic geography, being conſidered, 'in the eye of prophecy, as coexiſtent' and 'as ſtill 'alive[21];' and we muſt conclude, that not only in Europe, but in all the countries of the globe, formerly poſſeſſed by the Babylonians and Perſians, the Greeks and Romans, the modern antichriſtian monarchies ſhall be ſo completely deſtroyed, that not the minuteſt portion of their power ſhall be ſuffered to maintain its ground. From an obſervation, ſhortly to be alleged from Sir I. Newton, this concluſion will appear farther evident. All the beſt commentators do, indeed, agree, that the fourth of Daniel's empires is the Roman in its largeſt ſignification; and that it includes, not only the republican government of the Conſuls, not only the arbitrary government of the Emperors, but the multiplied dominion of their ſucceſſors, the Ten Kings: and it muſt therefore be admitted, in conſiſtency with this, that the other metals are not merely emblematic of the empires of Aſſyria, of Perſia, and of Greece, properly ſo called, but likewiſe of the modern as well as the ancient monarchies, erected in thoſe parts of the globe. Theſe laſt, in the ſtrict acceptation of the words, had indeed periſhed antecedently to the firſt propagation of Chriſtianity; ſo that the ſymbolic ſtone, having no exiſtence, could not poſſibly have contributed to break *them* in pieces.

The words of Jurieu and of biſhops Newton and Chandler, I next cite, though it muſt be acknowledged, that on a matter, predicted with ſo much plainneſs, there

[20] The expreſſion alludes, ſays Mr. Lowth, 'to the threſhing-floors in 'the Eaſtern countries, which were uſually placed on the tops of hills.'

[21] Vol. II. p. 143.

is

is little need of farther elucidation or of additional authorities. 'These *Ten* Toes,' says the divine of Rotterdam, 'are the Ten Kings, which were to make up the kingdom of Antichrist[22], and reign together with him, in 'the last period of the Roman empire, during the 1260 'years marked in the Revelation[23].' 'The kingdom of 'Christ,' says the bishop of Bristol, 'was first set up, 'while the Roman empire was in its full strength with '*legs of iron*. The Roman empire was afterwards di-'vided into Ten lesser kingdoms, the remains of which 'are subsisting at present. The image is still standing 'upon his feet and toes of iron and clay:—but *the stone* 'will one day smite *the image* upon *the feet* and *toes*, and 'destroy it utterly[24].' Not unsimilar is the language of bp. Chandler. 'The kingdom of *the mountain*,' says the prelate, 'shall beat the feet of the monarchical statue 'to dust[25].' In truth, the prophet himself does not merely predict, that the feet of this image of monarchy shall be broken in pieces; but he afterwards speaks without a figure, adding by way of explanation, v. 44, that *all these kingdoms shall be broken in pieces and consumed*. To darken the import of such language would be a vain attempt. As the ruin of these Ten Kings appears plainly announced by the voice of prophecy, will not some of the readers of Dr. Gill's Exposition of Daniel, when they peruse his enumeration[26] of the countries which they govern, take especial notice of the imperial dominion in Germany, and of the monarchies

[22] In order to understand the apocalypse, it is of the first importance, that the reader fix in his mind correct ideas of the genuine extent of the antichristian empire, and learn who *are* the persons who hold within it a high pre-eminence of crimes and power.

[23] Vol. II. p. 290. [24] Vol. I. p. 426.

[25] Def. of Christianity, p. 106. The distinction of Mr. Mede, hereafter to be given in his own words, the bishop here adopts.

[26] On Dan. vii. 24.

of Sardinia and Spain; and be ready to ſuſpect, that the overthrow at leaſt of theſe tyrannic governments is not removed to any very remote diſtance?

It is obſerved in v. 42, that *the Toes of the Feet were part of iron and part of clay*, i. e. ſays Mat. Henry, the Ten Kingdoms differed in point of ſtrength; and in the next verſe it is added, *whereas thou ſaweſt iron mixt with miry clay, they ſhall mingle themſelves with the ſeed of men, but they ſhall not cleave one to another.* This, ſays Mr. Lowth, ſignifies that 'theſe Ten Kingdoms ſhall be a med-'ley of people of different nations, laws, and cuſtoms: 'and although the kings of the ſeveral nations ſhall try 'to ſtrengthen themſelves by marriage-alliances into one 'another's families, yet the different intereſts which they 'purſue, will make them often engage in wars with each 'other.' Before it was otherwiſe. Antecedently to the dominion and independence of theſe countries, Pagan Rome formed one firm compact body, governed by the ſame laws, and acknowledging the ſame ſovereign.

'It is,' declares Dr. More, 'the univerſal ſenſe of all 'eccleſiaſtic writers, that the Fourth Beaſt is the Roman 'empire, as both Cornelius a Lapide and Gaſpar Sanc-'tius, both of them jeſuits, yet do roundly aſſert[27].' 'That the Roman empire,' ſays Dr. Worthington[28], 'was to be divided into Ten Kingdoms, was underſtood 'from this prophecy, and from Daniel's viſion of the 'Fourth Beaſt, with Ten Horns, correſponding to it, by '*many* of the ancient fathers[29], who lived ſome centuries 'before any ſuch diviſion was made, or ſeemed in the 'leaſt probable. And that this was the tradition of ec-'cleſiaſtical writers in general before his time, is teſtified 'by St. Jerom[30].' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks Joſeph

[27] Myſt. of Iniq. p. 410. [28] Vol. II. p. 77.
[29] Such are Tertullian and Irenæus, Cyril and Arethas.
[30] Hieron. in Dan. vii.

Mede.

Mede. That the Roman empire was 'the fourth king-'dom of Daniel was believed by the church of Iſrael 'both before and in our Saviour's time; received by the 'diſciples of the apoſtles, and the whole Chriſtian 'church for the firſt 400 years[31], without any known 'contradiction. And I confeſs, having ſo good ground 'in ſcripture, it is with me *tantum non articulus fidei*, 'little leſs than an article of faith[32].'

It is to ch. vii. which contains the parallel viſion of *the Four* ſymbolic *Beaſts*, that the attention of the reader is now ſolicited. Here alſo the ſame events are predicted, and the monarchies both of Europe and of Aſia are threatened. After giving a prophetic account of the four firſt Beaſts, Daniel ſays in v. 7, *I was ſeeing after this in the viſions of the night, and behold a fourth Beaſt formidable and terrible, and ſtrong exceedingly, which had large teeth of iron; it devoured and broke in pieces, and trampled upon the remains with its feet, and it was diſtinguiſhed from all the Beaſts that were before it, for it had Ten Horns*[33]. 'The Ten Toes and *the Ten Horns*,' ſays bp. Newton, 'were alike fit emblems of the Ten 'Kingdoms, which aroſe out of the diviſion of the 'Roman empire[34].' The generality of commentators, though they heſitate not to acknowledge, that the Ten Horns ſignify the modern kingdoms ſeated in the Weſtern part of the Roman empire, yet, without any reaſon which I can diſcover, but a well-founded apprehenſion of giving offence, think proper to apply all the former deſcriptive part of the verſe to Pagan Rome. But that they are not authorized in this reſtricted application of

[31] See this point proved at length in Dr. Creſſener's Appendix to his *Demonſt. of the Firſt Principles of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc.*

[32] Vol. II. p. 899.

[33] This is from the Improved Verſion of Mr. Wintle.

[34] Vol. I. p. 496.

it, an unprejudiced inſpection of the prophet's own words will be ſufficient to ſhew. The deſcription is alike applicable to the general conduct of the Roman emperors, and to that of the Ten princes who have ſince ruled over the Weſtern provinces of their empire; nor could the prophet, without departing from his ſymbol, have pourtrayed it in language more ſtrong and expreſſive. This emblematic perſonage *had large iron-teeth.* Now Dr. Lancaſter informs us, that 'teeth are frequently uſed in ſcripture as the ſymbols of cruelty, or 'of a devouring enemy.' Its *ſtamping* of *the remains* or *the reſidue with its feet* 'alludes,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'to 'the fury of wild beaſts, who ſtamp upon that part of 'their prey which they cannot devour.' And have not the tyrants of Europe been equally laviſh in their expences; equally violent in their oppreſſions? Of the revenues extorted by them from their ſubjects, have they not waſted much more than they have enjoyed?

Having treated of the Ten Horns in v. 7 and 8, Daniel immediately ſubjoins in v. 9 and 10, *I beheld till the thrones were caſt down*[35], *and the Ancient of Days did ſit*, and *the judgment was ſet*, i. e. ſays Mr. Sam. Clark, God 'did *judge* and *puniſh* theſe tyrannical em-'pires, and delivered his people from their oppreſſion.' In v. 9 the prophet, ſpeaking of the Supreme Being, ſays, *his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels*[36] *as burning fire*; i. e. according to the explication of the ſame annotator, 'the *Revolutions* and diſpenſations of

[35] To this clauſe Poole and Clark, bp. Hall and Dr. Prieſtley, aſcribe without heſitation the obvious ſenſe; but the Hebrew word, ſays Calvin, may be tranſlated *thronos fuiſſe vel erectos vel dejectos.* The expreſſion, ſays Dr. Prieſtley, clearly implies 'violence in their diſſolution.' Faſt Serm. for Feb. 28, 1794, p. 6.

[36] 'Grotius obſerves, that the ancient thrones and *ſellæ curules* had 'wheels.' Wintle.

'his

'his providence[37]' will be 'very deſtructive to the 'wicked.' Daniel adds in v. 11, *I was attentive till the Beaſt was ſlain, and its body deſtroyed, and it was delivered up to the burning of fire*[38]. 'To *kill* or *ſlay*,' ſays Dr. Lancaſter, 'is to be explained according to the na-'ture of the ſubject ſpoken of;' and '*to kill a kingdom* 'is to deſtroy utterly the power it had to act as ſuch.' That *to burn with fire* is an expreſſion of ſimilar import, there has before been occaſion to note. In v. 12 the prophet announces, *that concerning the reſt of the Beaſts, they had their dominion taken away*. '*Beaſts*,' ſays Jurieu on this paſſage, 'do certainly denote ſtates and em-'pires; ſo that it ſeems as if all ſovereign power, 'i. e. Monarchical, ſhould be taken away[39].' The ſymbols of the prophet are indeed interpreted for us in this very chapter, as they were apparently communicated to him in his viſion by an angelic being. *I came near*, ſays Daniel (v. 16), *unto one of them that ſtood by, and aſked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the thing*. We are accordingly informed by the angel of the viſion, that *the Fourth Beaſt*, which *had Ten Horns, ſhall be the Fourth Kingdom upon earth, which ſhall be diverſe from all kingdoms, and ſhall devour the whole earth, and ſhall tread it down, and break it in pieces*; and that *the Ten Horns out of this Kingdom are Ten Kings that ſhall*

[37] Agreeably to this bp. Newcome obſerves, in commenting on the 1ſt ch. of Ezekiel, that *the wheels* ſpoken of by that prophet, 'are ſuppoſed to 'expreſs the Revolutions of God's providence, which are regular, though 'they appear intricate.'

[38] This is from Mr. Wintle's Improved Verſion.

[39] Vol. II. p. 382. From a compariſon of this paſſage with p. 379, where he declares, that the millennium will not be a ſtate of anarchy, but that 'there ſhall be ſome to *govern*, and others to *obey*,' Jurieu appears to have expected, that *Republics* would be every where eſtabliſhed.

*ariſe*[40]. And in v. 26 it is added (the angel ſtill ſpeaks), *But the judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take away his dominion, to conſume and to deſtroy it unto the end*[41].

But who are *the reſt of the Beaſts*, whoſe *dominion* was to be *taken away?* Let Sir I. Newton inform us. In explaining this paſſage, he obſerves, that 'all the four 'Beaſts are ſtill alive;' and adds, that 'the nations of 'Chaldea and Aſſyria are *ſtill* the firſt Beaſt. Thoſe of 'Media and Perſia are *ſtill* the ſecond Beaſt. Thoſe of 'Macedon, Greece, and Thrace, Aſia Minor, Syria and 'Egypt, are *ſtill* the third[42].' Whilſt the Hebrew prophet declares, that the ten-horned *Beaſt was ſlain*, he adds of theſe other emblematic *Beaſts* (v. 12), *yet* THEIR *lives were prolonged for a ſeaſon and time.* Does not this clauſe plainly enough intimate, that, after the arbitrary[43] monarchies of Europe ſhall have been obliterated, the deſpotic governments of Aſia and of Africa, though their exiſtence will indeed be *prolonged for a*

[40] V. 23 and 24.

[41] With reſpect to this verſe, cited in a former chapter, it ſcarcely needs be obſerved, that it manifeſtly refers to *the Ten Horns*, as well as to *the little Horn*, of *the Beaſt*. See Brenius.

[42] Obſ. on Dan. p. 31. Another interpretation, yet more extenſive in its import, is noticed and explained by Mede. The expreſſion, *the reſt of the Beaſts*, may, he ſays (p. 255), be underſtood as not limited to the three firſt ſymbolic Beaſts, but as comprehending the kingdoms of the world in general. *Vau*, rendered in our verſion, *as concerning*, he obſerves may be tranſlated *alſo*; 'alſo *the reſt of the Beaſts*, &c. As for the word *Beaſts* to be 'taken here for other kingdoms as well as the Four great ones, it needs 'make no ſcruple. For we ſhall find it ſo in the next chapter, where it is 'ſaid of the Medo-Perſian *Ram* (verſe 4), that *no Beaſts might ſtand before 'him*, that is, no State or Kingdom was able to reſiſt his power: ſo here 'may *the reſt of the Beaſts* be the States and Kingdoms contemporary with 'the Fourth Beaſt.'

[43] I confeſs, that if I followed the commentators, I ſhould not reſtrict this deſtruction of monarchies to thoſe which are *arbitrary*, but ſhould ſay *the monarchies in general* ſeated in that part of the world of which the prophet ſpeaks. On this point the reader muſt judge for himſelf.

*time*,

*time*, yet that they alſo will, at length, moſt aſſuredly fall? And does not reaſon herſelf teach us, that this will probably happen? Is it not to be expected, that political Liberty will be progreſſive in its courſe; and that it will flouriſh on the continent, and among the iſlands, of Europe, before it is tranſplanted into the warmer climes of the old world, which are leſs favourable to its growth?

Though North America ſtands at ſuch a diſtance from the European continent, and conſequently the changes which happen there muſt have a very diminiſhed influence on this quarter of the globe; though it has gained far leſs by its revolution than almoſt any nation on that continent would have done, becauſe it never bowed its neck under the yoke of deſpotiſm, or an accumulation of taxes, and never did an expenſive court annoy its provinces, to ſerve as a rallying point to vice and corruption, and a center from which they might copiouſly flow; it nevertheleſs powerfully encouraged the authors of the French Revolution during its commencement and proſecution, and threw a ſtrong ray of light on the meaſures they were to adopt, and the principles they were to conſecrate. As ſoon as France then, a nation of ſuch populouſneſs, ingenuity, and diſtinguiſhed attainments, ſeated as it is in the very center of Europe, and poſſeſſing a language ſo generally ſtudied, ſhall completely have baffled the efforts of the confederated princes; and, reſtored to internal order, ſhall begin to reap, in a ſeaſon of tranquillity, thoſe golden fruits, which are the natural growth of an equal government, repreſentative in its conſtruction, and founded on the rights of man; is it not to be expected, that its example will prove irreſiſtible, and that in no long time it will be followed by the more enlightened of the European nations? The probability of events following each other

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in this train ſtateſmen and princes have not failed to diſcern and to dread; and they act accordingly.

That the antichriſtian monarchies and ariſtocracies of the world may be demoliſhed, reaſon inſtructs us to hope, as well on account of the oppreſſor as the oppreſſed. To raiſe men to a giddy height of unjuſt power and unmerited titular diſtinction, is to expoſe them to a ſeries of moral dangers, of the moſt ſerious kind, and which they cannot reaſonably be expected to ſurmount. Perceiving that their vanity will be indulged, their wants ſupplied, their deſires anticipated, without exertion, without knowledge, without virtue; they commonly ſlide inſenſibly into the ignominious lap of indolence; and, diſſipating their time in the company of the profligate, and in an inſipid routine of amuſements, yield themſelves up to the tyranny of paſſions, alike injurious to ſociety and to the individual. This ſubject has almoſt always been conſidered in much too narrow a point of view. That this is only the commencing ſtage of our exiſtence is a truth which ought permanently to impreſs our minds. It ought therefore to be an anxious ſubject of our enquiry, what is the ſtate of ſociety, and what is the ſpecies of government, which is beſt adapted, by its influence on morals, to fit and prepare men for a future world. Now thoſe exiſting governments, which are founded on oppreſſion, and trample on the rights of man, are ſo fatally operative in the extinction of light and virtue, that they are decidedly calculated to diſqualify men for a ſtate of future exiſtence. Indeed when we advert to the general condition of mankind, diſtributed as they are, into thoſe who tyrannize, and thoſe who are the objects of tyranny; when we reflect, that a numerous and diſtinct claſs of vices are the natural growth of *each* of theſe ſituations; when we thence collect, that the great maſs of human-kind appear, *in conſe-*

*quence*

*quence of this*, in a great degree to be incapacitated for the elevated employments of heaven and the purity of its pleaſures, the overthrow of all ſuch governments cannot but ſtrike the mind, as having a degree of importance, which it is not in the power of language to expreſs, or of the human underſtanding to calculate. Hence alſo it appears (and it is an awful conſideration), that he who is inſtrumental in perpetuating a corrupt and wicked government, is alſo inſtrumental in unfitting his fellow-men for the felicity of the celeſtial manſions, and in perhaps occaſioning them to occupy, through all the ſucceſſive ſtages of their future exiſtence, a lower rank than that to which they would otherwiſe have attained.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### ON THE NUMBERS WHICH OCCUR IN DANIEL AND ST. JOHN.

IN a work like the preſent it would probably be thought by many a material omiſſion, were no notice to be taken of the numbers which are found in Daniel and St. John. By the former of theſe inſpired writers we are told, that the little horn ſhall continue in power for *a time, and times, and the dividing of time*[1]. The latter, ſpeaking of *the Gentiles*, or ſpurious Chriſtians, ſays (xi. 2), *the Holy City ſhall they tread under foot* 42 *months*; and in the following verſe, that the *two witneſſes ſhall propheſy a thouſand two hundred and three-*

[1] VII. 25. 'Amongſt the old prophets, Daniel is moſt diſtinct in order of time, and eaſieſt to be underſtood.' Sir I. Newton's Obſer. on Dan. p. 15.

*ſcore*

*ſcore days, clothed in ſackcloth.* In deſcribing the ten-horned Beaſt, he ſays (xiii. 5), *that power was given unto him to continue* 42 *months.* In the 14th v. of the xiith ch. the true church of Chriſt is repreſented in a forlorn and perſecuted ſtate, under the emblem of a woman *flying into the wilderneſs, where ſhe is nouriſhed for a time, and times, and half a time*; and in v. 6 is ſaid to continue *there a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days.*

'Now all theſe numbers,' ſays bp. Newton, 'you will 'find upon computation to be the ſame, and each of 'them to ſignify 1260 years. For—*a time*, all agree, 'ſignifies a year[2],—and *a time, and times, and the divid-'ing of time*, or *half a time*, are 3 years and a half, and '3 years and a half are 42 months, and 42 months are '1260 days, and 1260 days in the prophetic ſtyle are '1260 *years*. From all theſe dates and characters it may 'fairly be concluded, that the time of the church's great 'affliction, and of the reign of Antichriſt, will be a 'period of 1260 years[3].'

That theſe are *definite* numbers, ſays Mede, is unqueſtionable. 'The ſcriptures,' he obſerves, 'uſe *no* num-'bers indefinitely but ſuch as the uſe of ſpeech in the 'language of the people had made ſuch.' And 'com-'pound numbers are never taken indefinitely, either in 'Latin, Greek, or Hebrew: compound numbers, I 'mean thoſe which are compounded of units, tens and 'hundreds, &c. thoſe which are of *heterogeneal* parts; 'ſuch as 42, the number of months in the apocalypſe;

[2] 'By a *time*, it is agreed by interpreters, is meant a year, by way of ex-'cellence, as a period the moſt diſtinguiſhed.' Wintle on Dan. vii. 25. Thus when Daniel ſays of Nebuchadnezzar (iv. 16), *let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beaſt's heart be given unto him: and let ſeven times paſs over him*; the *ſeven times* ſignify ſeven years.

[3] Vol. I. p. 488; vol. III. p. 380.

'1260,

'1260, the number of days; three times and a half, 'which is a number of a fraction[4].' Among the other circumſtances, ſays this diſtinguiſhed commentator, which render it evident, that *days* are to be taken for *years*, and *months* for *months of years*, is this: the events deſcribed by the prophet are far too numerous, too important, and require far too long a period, to ſuffer us to ſuppoſe, that they can be accompliſhed within the narrow limits of three ſingle years and a half[5]. To prove that the ſubſtitution of a day for a year was conſonant to the language of the ancient Hebrew prophets, a paſſage from Ezekiel may be appealed to, where he ſays[6], *thou ſhalt bear the iniquity of the houſe of Judah forty days: and I have appointed thee each day for a year.* In that other famous prophecy of Daniel, that of the 70 weeks or 490 days, they are, ſays the learned Dr. Creſſener[7], taken for ſo many years 'by almoſt the 'unanimous conſent of all interpreters.' 'Since we 'can,' ſays the excellent Mr. Whiſton, in this prophecy of the Seventy Weeks 'poſitively appeal to the event 'on our ſide, and allege the exact fulfilling of the 'ancient prophecies in this ſenſe of days for years;— 'there can remain no reaſonable doubt in the caſe[8].'

With reſpect to the time, when the 1260 years *commenced*, and conſequently when they ſhall terminate, I venture to advance nothing of my own, nor place my confidence in the calculations of others. But as ſome

[4] P. 741.

[5] P. 742, 743. See another reaſon in p. 131. [6] IV. 6.

[7] Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. 170.

[8] P. 17. 'The way of counting by weeks of years ſeems,' ſays bp. Chandler, (Def. of Chr. p. 112), 'to have been uſed by the ancients. 'Varro, at the time of writing his book inſcribed *Hebdomades*, ſaith, he 'was entered in the 12th week of (his) years, i. e. his 78th year. Aul. 'Gell. Noct. Att. iii. 10.'

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of my readers will be likely to enquire, whether no dates, apparently in unison with fact and probability, have been assigned for the commencement and for the conclusion of the 1260 years; and as I am unwilling altogether to disappoint them, and to leave those who have not before made any enquiries on the subject totally uninformed upon it, I shall state the two æras, which have been specified by Mr. Bicheno, the writer of a sensible pamphlet before referred to; and shall allege some of the reasons which may be advanced in favour of them.

To prepare the reader for what follows, a short quotation from Mr. Whiston shall, however, be previously given. At the expiration of the 1260 years 'there is to 'be *a Great Earthquake* (Apoc. xi. 13); the το δεκατον *of* 'the City is to fall; in that Earthquake 7000 names of 'men are to be slain:—and soon after the seventh angel 'is to sound the great trumpet, for the restoration of the 'Jews, and for pouring out of the seven vials or last 'plagues upon the Beast's kingdom, in order to its utter 'ruin and destruction for ever[9].' In agreement with this statement, Mr. Bicheno supposes, that the conclusion of the 1260 years and the symbolic earthquake in the Tenth Part of the city are contemporaneous; and consequently, since the symbolic earthquake, or French revolution, predicted by St. John in ch. xi. *did actually take place* in the year 1789, that the 1260 years terminated at that memorable epoch. It cannot be denied, that it is a circumstance in favour of this method of calculating them, that the period specified corresponds with the idea, which learned men had previously formed of the 1260 years. Many have supposed, that this is the period during which antichristian tyranny over the persons and the consciences of men was destined *especially* to prevail, and to

[9] P. 271.

remain

remain almoſt unchecked. It was not *immediately* upon the expiration of theſe years, that its overthrow was to be accompliſhed. But as it was exerted to a conſiderable extent, antecedently to the commencement of that period, ſo likewiſe for ſome time ſubſequent to it, this antichriſtian ſyſtem of oppreſſion was to ſubſiſt, but without its wonted firmneſs, its priſtine ſtability, and that ſervility of acquieſcence, with which its meaſures had been heretofore ſubmitted to throughout the countries of Europe. At the concluſion of this period it was to receive ſome mighty ſhock. And do not the events of the French revolution, and the effects it has already produced, admirably correſpond with theſe pre-conceived notions? Have not the intereſts of the papacy and of eccleſiaſtical tyranny, as well as of civil deſpotiſm, in conſequence of that revolution, received ſuch a fatal wound as will never be healed?

But if the year 1789, the æra of the French revolution, be thought to be an epoch ſingularly ſuitable for the *concluſion* of the 1260 years: the next enquiry is, whether on the year, and about the time, when that period *commenced*, means were adopted to promote, confirm, and extend the tyranny of princes and of prieſts over the faith and conſciences of men. I now tranſcribe a part of what Mr. Bicheno has urged to prove, that in the year 529 this did actually happen; and the reader with a glance of his eye will perceive, that there elapſed from the year 529 to 1789 exactly 1260 years. In the year 529, 'the *Juſtinian Code* was firſt publiſhed[10], by 'which thoſe powers, privileges, and immunities were 'ſecured to the clergy; that union perfected between

[10] The following are the words of cardinal Baronius, in his account of the year 529, *hoc eodem anno idem Juſtinianus Imperator, quem dederat collidenaum emendandumque codicem ſuo nomine Juſtinianeum appellatum, abſolutum confirmavit, vulgavitque.*

'things

'things civil and eccleſiaſtical, and thoſe laws impoſed 'on the church, which have proved ſo injurious to Chriſ-'tianity, and ſo calamitous to mankind. And which 'code, through the zeal of the clergy, has been received, 'more or leſs, as the foundation of the juriſprudence of 'almoſt every ſtate in Chriſtendom; and that not only 'in things *civil*, but eccleſiaſtical.' It was alſo in the year 529, that 'a new order of monks, which in a manner 'abſorbed all the others eſtabliſhed in the Weſt, was in-'ſtituted by Benedict of Nurſia.—This and other monaſ-'tic orders (ſinks of ignorance, indolence, and vice!) 'were the fountains, from whence iſſued all ſorts of 'abominations, and the rivers which carried ſuperſtition, 'oppreſſion, and violence to all parts of the earth[11].' Of the corrupt opinions and antichriſtian practices, which prevailed at this period, ample memorials may be found in Moſheim; who obſerves with reſpect to the Benedictines, that they 'laboured moſt ardently to ſwell the 'arrogance, by enlarging the power and authority, of the 'Roman pontiff[12].' How highly favourable the founding of the Benedictine order was to the aggrandiſement of the prieſthood and pontificate, ſome idea may be formed from an obſervation of the lofty language and the exulting tone, with which Baronius has ſpoken of it in his account of the year 529. On the code of Juſtinian, and on the conduct of the emperor who promulgated it, I ſhall not harraſs the attention of the reader by the multiplication of extracts. One paſſage, however, and that a ſufficiently long one, ſhall on this ſubject be cited from a writer of the laſt century, who was accurately acquainted with ec-

[11] Signs of the Times, p. 61.

[12] Eccl. Hiſt. vol. I. p. 448. It was alſo in the year 529, that the prelates who met in the ſecond council of Vaſio endeavoured to augment the authority of the Holy See, commanding that the name of the Roman Pontiff ſhould be recited in their reſpective churches.

eccleſiaſtical

cleſiaſtical hiſtory. It is from an apocalyptical work of Dr. Creſſener, and from a chapter wherein he is profeſſedly treating on 'the firſt date of the riſe of the Beaſt,' that the paſſage is taken. Antecedently to the quotation of it, it may be proper to inform the reader, that Juſtinian was raiſed to the imperial throne in the year 527. In the beginning of his reign, ſays Dr. Creſſener, Juſtinian publiſhes an edict concerning his faith, wherein he 'threatens all who ſhould diſſent from it, that they ſhould 'have no manner of indulgence; and that, upon the 'diſcovery of them, they ſhould ſuffer the law as pro-'feſſed heretics, which was to be baniſhed the Roman 'territories, and which was never executed upon the 'generality of diſſenters before. And here does *his* '*faith* appear to be made *the rule* and *meaſure* of ortho-'doxy to the whole empire, upon a penalty which had 'terror enough in it. This faith he ſends to pope John 'for his concurrence with him in it; and tells him, "that he did it to conform all to the church of Rome; "that it was always his deſire to preſerve the unity of "the apoſtolic ſee;"—and for that purpoſe "to bring "all the Eaſtern churches under his ſubjection, and to "unite them to the ſee of his Holineſs." Pope John's 'anſwer to him does repeat the ſame thing out of his 'letter, with great thanks to him, as, that he did preſerve 'the faith of the Roman church, and did bring all elſe 'under the ſubjection of it, and did draw them into the 'unity of it. Therein alſo does Juſtinian expreſsly call 'the church of Rome *the Head of all Churches*, and de-'ſires a rule of faith for the biſhops of the Eaſt. The 'pope on the other ſide confirms the emperor's faith to 'be *the only true faith*, and that which the Roman 'church did always hold.—All this intercourſe betwixt 'the pope and the emperor is inſerted into the code of 'the Imperial law, as the ſtandard and rule for all to

'conform to, under the penalty to be judged to be here-
'tics.—Though the emperor's faith ſhould be accounted
'orthodox, yet the inducing ſuch a new penalty, which
'ſhould *force* it upon the conſciences of all men, as ſo
'neceſſary to ſalvation, that a man could not poſſibly be
'a member of the catholic church without the profeſſion
'of it, was certainly unwarrantable, and the firſt begin-
'ning of that tyrannizing power in the Roman church,
'which made the whole world to conform to all its arbi-
'trary decrees, and to worſhip it with a blind obedience
'to all its moſt unreaſonable commands.' Among the extravagant commands of Juſtinian one was, that all ſuch ſhould be anathematiſed, '*who did not damn all* '*thoſe whom they called heretics:* which certainly was 'one of the higheſt acts of tyranny over the conſciences 'of the univerſal church, and which of all their injunc-'tions was the moſt difficult to ſubſcribe unto[13].'

But probably there may be ſome perſons, who may think, that the commencement of the 1260 years had better be dated from the year 547 than from the year 529; partly becauſe Juſtinian's tyrannic proceedings in his management of councils, in his perſecution of heretics, and in his endeavours to bring about a uniformity of faith throughout the Roman empire, cannot be ſuppoſed to have been carried nearly to their full extent earlier than that year[14]; and partly becauſe they may be of opinion

[13] Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. p. 306.

[14] See Creſſener, ut ſupra p. 307—312. Juſtinian, ſays the jeſuit Petavius, innumerabilibus edictis Catholicæ fidei et eccleſiaſticæ diſciplinæ conſuluit. *Rationarium Temporum*, p. i. l. vii. c. 5. This celebrated emperor was an unfeeling bigot. 'The reign of Juſtinian,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'was an uniform, yet various ſcene of perſecution; and he appears 'to have ſurpaſſed his indolent predeceſſors, both in the contrivance of 'his laws and the rigour of their execution.' To the Samaritans of Paleſtine he 'offered only the alternative of baptiſm or rebellion.—It has 'been

opinion with Dr. Creſſener and other writers, that in this calculation 18 years are to be deducted from the 1260[15], ſince 1260 apocalyptic years, each conſiſting only of 360 days, amount to no more than 1242 ſolar or Julian years[16].

Some quotations ſhall now be added, which may ſerve to illuſtrate the opinion, that St. John by no means meant to intimate, that the concluſion of the 1260 years would be the epoch of *the complete overthrow* of civil or of ſpiritual tyranny. During the 1260 years, ſays bp. Newton, 'the *holy city*, the true church of Chriſt, was 'to be *trodden under foot*, which is the loweſt ſtate of 'ſubjection; *the two witneſſes* were not only to *propheſy*, 'but to *propheſy in ſackcloth*, that is in mourning and af-'fliction; *the woman*, the church, was to abide in *the* 'wilderneſs, that is in a forlorn and deſolate condition; 'and *power was given to the Beaſt* ποιησαι[17], not merely *to* 'continue, as it is tranſlated, but *to practiſe*, and *proſper*, 'and *to do* according to his will[18].—It doth not there-'fore follow, that the Beaſt is *to continue*, *to exiſt*, for

'been computed that 100,000 Roman ſubjects were extirpated in the Sa-'maritan war, which converted the once-fruitful province into a deſolate 'and ſmoaking wilderneſs. But, in the creed of Juſtinian, the guilt of 'murder could not be applied to the ſlaughter of unbelievers; and he 'piouſly laboured to eſtabliſh with fire and ſword the unity of the Chriſ-'tian faith.' Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. VIII. p. 320, 323, 324. On Mr. Gibbon's inaccurate uſe of the word *pious* (as it is an inaccuracy of which he is fond) I might here expatiate, were this a work adapted for ſuch a diſcuſſion.

[15]
547
1242
1789

[16] See Creſſener ut ſupra, p. 238, 239; and Fleming's Diſcourſe on the Riſe and Fall of the Papacy, p. 24—26.

[17] XIII. 5.

[18] See the word explained in the ſame way by Vitringa.

'no longer a time[19].' Though the power of princes and of prieſts over the perſons and the conſciences of men was to decline at the termination of the 1260 years, and was ſpeedily to fall into a weak and ſhattered ſtate; it is not therefore to be concluded, that at this epoch their authority was *all at once* to be overthrown, and their oppreſſions were to ceaſe in *all* the ſtreets of the ſymbolic city. 'Nothing,' ſays the bp. of Worceſter, 'has 'been more cenſured in proteſtant divines, than their 'temerity in fixing *the fall* of Antichriſt; though there '*are* certain data in the prophecies, from which very 'probable concluſions on that ſubject may be drawn. 'Experience, it is ſaid, contradicts this calculation. But 'it is not conſidered, that the fall of Antichriſt is not *a* '*ſingle event*, to happen all once; but *a ſtate of things*, 'to continue through a long tract of time, and to be 'gradually accompliſhed.—Suppoſe the ruin of the Weſ-'tern empire had been the ſubject of a prediction, and 'ſome had collected beforehand from the terms of the 'prophecy, that it would happen at a particular time; 'when yet nothing more, in fact, came to paſs, than *the* '*firſt irruption of the barbarous nations*; would it be 'certain that this collection was groundleſs and ill made, 'becauſe the empire ſubſiſted in a good degree of vigour 'for ſome centuries after? Might it not be ſaid, that the 'empire *was falling* from that æra, or perhaps before; 'though, in the event, it *fell* not, till its ſovereignty was 'ſhaken by the rude hands of Attila, or rather, till it was 'laid flat by the well-directed force of Theodoric[20]?'

At

[19] Vol. III. p. 214, 382. See ſimilar obſervations in *the Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Rel.* by Dr. Clarke, p. 432.

[20] Vol. II. p. 71. And though nothing more came to paſs in the year 1789 than the French Revolution; would it be certain that the fall of Antichriſt might not be dated from that year, and that ſuch an inference was ground-

At the close of the 1260 years, says the author of *an 'Essay on the Numbers of Daniel and John*, 'the Beast 'was to meet with a visible *check* to his power[21].' The Beast will not be destroyed, says Durham, at the expiration of the 1260 years; but, to use this early commentator's own words, his power will be clipped, and his authority shaken[22]. The seventh trumpet, says Mr. Whiston, which has the vials for its contents, is not to commence till after the 1260 years are expired; so that the 1260 years bring to a conclusion only the '*Prevail-* '*ing Tyranny* of the Beast.—But the end or destruction 'of the Beast himself' will not take place 'till *the end* 'of the same trumpet, or the conclusion of the vials[23].' To the same purpose speaks Dr. More. 'That the reign 'of the Beast does not end with the sixth trumpet' is, says this learned writer, 'a thing I do easily grant; but 'yet in the mean time, I contend that the fulfilling of his '42 months is at the *exitus* of the sixth trumpet, which 'respects the duration of the *entireness* thereof; which 'entireness was broken at *the rising of the witnesses*.— 'Unless the affairs of Europe should break of a sudden, 'as, Olaus says, the Frozen ocean does, and then immediately sinks (which is a miracle above belief), I see no 'probability at all of any other sense of the stinting the 'reign of the Beast to 42 months than I have already 'declared[24].'

groundless and ill made, because the antichristian empire subsisted in a good degree of vigour for some years after? Might it not be said, that the empire *was falling* from that æra, or perhaps before; though, in the event, it *fell* not, till its sovereignty was shaken by — — — — — — — — —, or rather, till it was laid flat by — — — — — — — — — — — — —? Here are chasms in the sentence, which our ignorance of futurity renders necessary, and which must be filled up at a future time.

[21] Burton's Ess. on the Numbers of Dan. and John, 1766, p. 263.

[22] P. 553. [23] P. 88, 89.

[24] On the Apoc. p. 263; and Myst. of Iniq. p. 380.

Now ſome probably may be of opinion, that the affairs of Europe *have* ſuddenly broken, and taken a new direction; and that a mighty change will be effected in the circumſtances of mankind by means of the revolution of France, by the ſpread of its principles and the progreſs of its arms. They may alſo not unreaſonably conclude, that, in this quarter of the world, the wheels of the exiſting fabrics of government, complex as they are in their original conſtruction, injured by the ruſt of age, often impeded by the colliſion of jarring intereſts, and every where clogged by the interference of ſuperfluous weights, will in a ſhort time be ſtopped by the obſtructions which will be thrown in their way; and that thoſe, who have hitherto regulated their movements, will ceaſe to direct them, or to put in motion thoſe engines of oppreſſion, in the management of which they now diſcover ſo much expertneſs, as they will be driven from their poſts, covered with diſgrace, and depreſſed by diſappointment. The People, they may expect, will hereafter be the great Firſt Moving Cauſe that ſhall actuate the machine of government; and the agents, whom they ſhall appoint, will determine on the ſpecific mode on which it ſhall be conſtructed, and adjuſt and ſuperintend its ſeveral operations, however numerous or complicated.

The change in the political world, already accompliſhed in France, ſome perhaps may conceive, is equal in point of greatneſs, in point of rapidity, in point of benefit, to the moſt ſtriking change which the natural world can produce. With reſpect alſo to ſome of thoſe lofty edifices of power, which are ſcattered over the ſurface of the European continent, it will perhaps be thought, that *the rapidity* with which theſe unwieldy fabrics, though they have ſubſiſted during the revolution of centuries, and to the ſuperficial obſerver appeared poſſeſſed of ſtrength which nothing could overpower or ſhatter, ſhall ſink and break in pieces, in conſequence

ſequence of that alteration of ſentiment which ſhall prevail, and that ardor of patriotiſm which ſhall be kindled, may not unaptly be compared to the ſuddenneſs, with which a vaſt ſea of ice, that before exhibited a proſpect the moſt dreary and comfortleſs, is ſubdued by thaw, and all its different compartments, on the change of weather and the kindly approach of ſummer, melt and diſappear; notwithſtanding that ſea has been ſo frozen by a northern winter, as to have laſted a long ſucceſſion of weeks, and notwithſtanding it appeared to the eye of the uninformed, too firm to be broken, and too hard to be diſſolved.

I now proceed to take ſome notice of the numbers which occur in the xiith ch. of Daniel; and as this concluding chapter of the Hebrew prophet is ſhort and a very remarkable one, I ſhall embrace this opportunity of quoting the greater part of it, and of introducing a few extracts in illuſtration of it. 'The prophecies of Da-'niel,' ſays Sir I. Newton, 'are all of them related to 'one another, as if they were but ſeveral parts of one 'general prophecy, given at ſeveral times[25].' In agreement with this remark, it has been concluded, that his predictions in ch. xii. have a relation to what he has elſewhere foretold with reſpect to the expiring of perſecution, the deſtruction of the antichriſtian monarchies, and the ſubſequent reign of genuine Chriſtianity in the world.

In v. 4 it is ſaid, *but thou, O Daniel, ſhut up the words, and ſeal the book, even to the time of the end: many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed.* 'To *ſhut up* a book,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'and '*to ſeal* it, is the ſame with concealing the ſenſe of it,— 'as hath been obſerved upon ch. viii. 25. And the ſame

[25] P. 24.

'reaſon is aſſigned in both places for this command, viz. 'becauſe there would be a long interval of time between 'the date of the prophecy, and the final accompliſhment 'of it.—But the nearer that time approached, the more 'light ſhould men have for underſtanding the prophecy 'itſelf; as is implied in the following words. *Many 'ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed.* 'Many ſhall be inquiſitive after truth, and keep correſ-'pondence with others for their better information: and 'the gradual completion of this and other prophecies 'ſhall direct obſerving readers to form a judgment con-'cerning thoſe particulars which are yet to be fulfilled.' But the latter words, though they may be admitted to have a peculiar reference to prophetic knowledge, may alſo be reaſonably thought to refer to the augmentation of knowledge in general. But what is *the time of the end?* In its ſtrict and proper ſenſe, ſays an intelligent commentator on Daniel, it 'is that time, wherein the 'years of Antichriſt are finiſhed[26].' Though the *nature* of the wonders foretold in this book of prophecy was thus imperfectly revealed to Daniel, ſomewhat was communicated to him relative to the *period* of their accompliſhment. For one of the angels of the viſion is repreſented in v. 6 as ſaying unto another angel, in the preſence of Daniel, and for his information, *how long ſhall it be to the end of theſe wonders? And*, ſays Daniel (v. 7—12), *I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and ſware by him that liveth for ever, that it ſhall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he ſhall have accompliſhed to ſcatter the power of the holy people, all theſe things ſhall be finiſhed. And I heard, but I underſtood not: then ſaid*

[26] Parker on Dan. p. 122.

*I, O my Lord, what ſhall be the end of theſe things? And he ſaid, go thy way, Daniel: for the words are cloſed up and ſealed till the time of the end. Many ſhall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked ſhall do wickedly: and none of the wicked ſhall underſtand: but the wiſe ſhall underſtand. And from the time that the daily ſacrifice ſhall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh deſolate ſet up, there ſhall be a thouſand two hundred and ninety days. Bleſſed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thouſand three hundred and five and thirty days.*

The period here ſpecified by Daniel, *a time, times, and an half*, ſignifies, ſays Mede, the 1260 years during which the ten-horned Beaſt was to reign[27]. The extract which follows is from the paraphraſe of Dr. Wells. *And I heard* the angel *ſwear by Him*, 'that *lives for* 'ever and ever, *that it ſhall be for a time, times, and an* 'half of time, i. e. the ſaid wonderful things are not to 'be accompliſhed, till the expiration or end of that por- 'tion of time of the Fourth Kingdom, during which '(according to what was made known unto Daniel in a 'former viſion, viz. chap. vii. 25) *the little horn ſhall* 'wear out the ſaints of the moſt High, and *they ſhall be* 'given into his hand.' As the words, repeatedly employed by Daniel in ch. vii. *the ſaints of the Moſt High*, are moſt certainly not to be underſtood of the Jews, but of genuine Chriſtians; ſo in like manner there is reaſon to believe, that that kindred expreſſion, *the holy people*, has in ch. xii. exactly the ſame ſignification[28]. The clauſe

[27] P. 885.

[28] That *the holy people*, in ch. xii. v. 7 of Dan. is to be underſtood of genuine Chriſtians, the learned Dr. Goodwin conceived to be unqueſtionable, p. 185. 'The Chriſtians may,' ſays bp. Newton (on Dan. vol. II. p. 48), 'full as well as the Jews be comprehended under the name of *the* 'holy

clauſe containing theſe words Waple[29] endeavours to illuſtrate by referring to a paſſage in the apocalypſe. By the '*accompliſhment* of *the ſcattering*, or diſperſion of '*the power of the holy people* can,' he ſays, 'be meant 'no other than the *woman's coming out of the wilder-* '*neſs*[30], where *the holy people* were diſperſed and ſcat-'tered.' But I do not conceive, that the prophet's words oblige us to conclude, that genuine Chriſtians will ceaſe to be oppreſſed, immediately at the expiration of the 1260 years. When he ſays, *that it ſhall be for a time, times, and an half*; *and* that *when he ſhall have accompliſhed to ſcatter the power of the holy people, all theſe things ſhall be finiſhed*; the meaning may be, that it is, for the 1260 years, that the whole body of true Chriſtians ſhall be *principally* expoſed to the attacks of civil and eccleſiaſtical tyranny; and that ſome time afterwards, when the period of their being in a diſperſed and precarious and perſecuted ſtate ſhall be completely accompliſhed, then that all the principal events foretold by Daniel ſhall be finiſhed. I ſhall ſhortly have occaſion to introduce a quotation from St. John, wherein he has manifeſtly copied from the 7th v. of the xiith ch. of

'*holy people*.' By '*the holy people*,' ſays a learned writer, who was quoted in the laſt chapter, and whoſe ſignature is *Synergus (Comment. and Eſſ.* p. 481), 'I underſtand the Chriſtians diſtinguiſhed by that general title 'from the reſt of the world, without any regard to their moral character, 'or any thing beſides their outward profeſſion.' Thus it appears, that the appellation of *the holy people*, with reſpect to extent of import, is differently underſtood by different writers.

[29] On Rev. x. 7.

[30] It is in ch. xii. v. 6 of the Rev. that the ſymbolic woman is repreſented as 'flying into a wilderneſs,' (I am now quoting from Mr. Lowman,) 'to intimate, the condition of the church would be difficult and 'dangerous in theſe times, like the Iſraelites, when they wandered in the 'wilderneſs.' '*The wilderneſs* into which ſhe fled intimates,' ſays a foreign writer, 'the church's obſcurity, poverty, and diſtreſs.' *New Syſt. of Apoc.* p. 60.

Daniel,

Daniel, at the very time when *he* is ſpeaking of the ſeventh trumpet and the deſtruction of the antichriſtian empire[31]. Here then the reader will be furniſhed with a new reaſon for concluding, that each of the prophets is ſpeaking of the ſame period and the ſame events.

*Many*, ſays Daniel, *ſhall be purified, and made white, and tried.* 'The perſecutions of the faithful,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'are deſigned for the trial of their faith, and 'purifying their lives.' *And from the time that the daily ſacrifice ſhall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh deſolate ſet up, there ſhall be a thouſand two hundred and ninety days.* That this computation cannot refer to the deſolate ſtate of Jeruſalem and the profanation of its temple, appears evident, becauſe a much longer period than 1290 years has elapſed, ſince the city and the temple were expoſed to the inſults of Antiochus, or Titus, or Hadrian. 'The ſame expreſſions,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'made uſe of to deſcribe Antiochus's perſe-'cution,' chap. xi. 31, are here applied to the deſolations 'made by Antichriſt, of which the former was a figure.' Mr. Wintle, to whom the public are indebted for a New Tranſlation of Daniel, obſerves, that 'the language is 'borrowed from the ſervice of the Jewiſh temple, and 'applicable to the church of God in a variety of ſtates 'and forms: that it is here particularly meant to have its 'illuſtration during the times of the Chriſtian church '*muſt*,' ſays Mr. Wintle, 'be evident, not only from the 'whole ſeries of the foregoing remarks, but becauſe the 'days cannot be taken in their ſtrict ſenſe, but muſt be 'underſtood for ſo many years.' 'The *ſetting up of the* '*abomination of deſolation*,' bp. Newton in like manner remarks, is 'a general phraſe[32].' *To ſet up the abomi-*

[31] See the note from Vitringa, at the bottom of p. 299.

[32] Vol. II. p. 193.

*nation*

*nation that maketh deſolate*, ſays Mr. Parker, is to eſtabliſh 'antichriſtian idolatries and ſuperſtitions, corrupt 'doctrine and unlawful worſhip;' and *to take away the daily ſacrifice* is to take away 'the true doctrine and 'worſhip inſtituted by Chriſt[33].' 'Here,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'the time allotted for the perſecutions of Anti-'chriſt, till the church be entirely cleanſed and purified, 'is enlarged from 1260 days, denoted by *time, times, and* 'an half, ver. 7, to 1290 days.' The prophet immediately adds, *Bleſſed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thouſand three hundred and five and thirty days*. The ſtate of mankind, at the end of this ſecond period of 45 years, is to be ſubſtantially meliorated[34].

Mr. Bicheno, who calculates, that the firſt period which Daniel ſpecifies, *a time, and times, and an half*, or the 1260 years, terminated in the year 1789, about which time alſo *the reſurrection of the witneſſes* and *the earthquake in the Tenth Part of the city* took place, conſequently ſuppoſes, that the 1290 years will end in the year 1819, and the 1335 years in 1864. During the firſt of theſe periods, reaching from the year 1789 to 1819, he concludes, that all the ſeven vials are to be poured out; 'a ſeaſon,' ſays he, 'it is likely of great calamities, but 'eſpecially to the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom.—To 'gather and try the Jews preparatory to their conver-'ſion, to deſtroy the remains of tyranny, and to purify

[33] Parker on Dan. p. 109, 133. 'The offering daily ſacrifices is an ex-'preſſion very proper to denote the external of the Chriſtian worſhip.' *Comment. and Eſſ.* ut ſupra, ſignature *Synergus*, vol. I. p. 473.

[34] Bp. Newton ſays, 'it is, I conceive, to theſe great events, the fall of 'Antichriſt, the reſtoration of the Jews, and the beginning of the glorious 'millennium, that the three different dates in Daniel of 1260 years, 1290 'years, and 1335 years, are to be referred,' vol. III. p. 393. That the Jews will be reſtored to their own land in the courſe of 30 years, after the concluſion of the 1260, I do not, however, myſelf conceive to be at all probable. See Rom. xi. 25.

'and

'and enlarge the Gentile church, will occupy forty-five 'years more.—This is the time of which Daniel ſays, '*Bleſſed is he that cometh to it*, and which is the year '1864[35].'

Such is the ſtatement of Mr. Bicheno. On the probability of it the reader muſt judge for himſelf. Perſuaded that the fixing of future dates is a buſineſs of infinite delicacy, I ſhould certainly myſelf have been very unwilling to have ſpoken in ſo peremptory a manner reſpecting the epochas of Daniel, or on *the period* when any unaccompliſhed events are deſtined to happen[36]. With reſpect to the time when the proper millenniary period ſhall commence, I do not allow myſelf even to conjecture; and, on the number of years which will be occupied in the effuſion of the vials, I likewiſe conceive myſelf incompetent to give any opinion. Of this, however, I am perſuaded, that they will be poured out much ſooner than *many* commentators have ſuppoſed.

The following is the opinion of an ingenious French commentator. It 'may be affirmed as certain and indu-'bitable,—that when the vials come to be poured out, 'there ſhall be no long diſtance between the pouring out 'of one of them, and the effuſion of the reſt. Becauſe 'it is ſaid in the xth chapter, v. 6, that *the angel ſware* '*that there ſhould be time no longer*. That is to ſay, that 'there ſhould be no more delay; that the judgments of 'God ſhall overtake the Beaſt, without any reſpite be-'twixt one and another.—Before the pouring forth of 'the firſt' vial 'be ended, the ſecond ſhall begin, and ſo 'the reſt[37].' The whole of the angelic oath, relating to

[35] Signs of the Times, p. 60, 65.

[36] In juſtice to Mr. Bicheno it ought, however, to be obſerved, that *he* ſpeaks in a far leſs confident tone, than that which many preceding calculators have employed.

[37] New Syſt. of the Apoc. p. 290.

the

the period of the ſeventh trumpet, which I have alluded to as being copied from Daniel, is thus ſublimely expreſſed. *And the angel which I ſaw ſtand upon the ſea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and ſware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the ſea and the things which are therein, that there ſhould be no longer delay*[38]*: but in the days of the voice of the ſeventh angel, when he ſhall begin to ſound*[39]*, the myſtery of God ſhould be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his ſervants the prophets*[40]. By Mr. Pyle a part of this paſſage is thus paraphraſed. Having lifted up his hands to heaven, in the ſame manner as the angel in Daniel is repreſented to have done[41], he, 'in the name of the Almighty and 'Eternal Father of all things, proteſted, that whatever 'the ſaid Daniel, or any other prophet had foretold con-'cerning the kingdom of Chriſt, and the glorious ſucceſs 'of it here upon earth, *in the latter times*, ſhould be all 'punctually fulfilled. And particularly that part of 'Daniel's prediction, that the reign of the antichriſtian 'kingdom of idolatry and perſecution was to continue, 'after it is in its full height, but for *a time, and times, 'and a half time* (i. e. for 1260 years and no longer), 'ſhould be verified in the period of this ſeventh trum-'pet.' With reſpect to the expreſſion, *the myſtery of*

[38] Thus Mr. Wakefield tranſlates this clauſe. In our common tranſlation it is, *that there ſhould be time no longer.* That χρονος ſignifies *delay* may be ſeen in the lexicons of Conſtantine and Hederic; that it here bears that ſignification is the ſtatement of Brightman, of Doddridge, and of Vitringa; and it is obſerved by Daubuz, that in this place it is thus underſtood by 'moſt interpreters and verſions.'

[39] Daubuz renders the words, *in the days of the voice of the ſeventh angel, when he ſhall ſound the trumpet, the myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed*; and adds, that the original might have been tranſlated, *when he ſhall* HAVE *ſounded.*

[40] X. 5, 6, 7. [41] XII. 7.

*God,*

*God*, it ſignifies, ſays Vitringa, 'the oracles of the pro-'phets, which interpret the ſecret will of God;' and it conſiſts, adds this eminent commentator, of the great concluding events which they foretell; namely, of the remarkable judgments by which the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom ſhall be deſtroyed, the eſtabliſhment of that kingdom throughout the globe, and the conſequent univerſal prevalence of virtue and holineſs.

Whenever the vials 'begin,' ſays Dr. Beverly in his *Scripture Line of Time*[42], 'they move with ſo ſwift a 'courſe, that it is impoſſible there ſhould be any delay in 'them after they are begun, or that any of them ſhould 'be entered, and not all of them in their order ſwiftly 'poured out.' It is obſerved by Brightman, (a commentator always treated with great reſpect by Vitringa,) that the ſeventh trumpet, which, he ſays, has the ſeven vials for its conſtituent parts, 'ſhould be diſpatched in a 'ſhort time, and ſhould not linger ſo long as the former 'trumpets did, but ſhould fly rather with ſwift wings[43].' 'The effects of the ſeventh trumpet,' ſays Mr. Waple, 'ſhall not take up any long time in their accompliſhing; 'but ſhall be performed with ſpeed, and of a ſudden; 'which may perhaps be the meaning of ερχεται ταχυ: 'for, as a judicious perſon hath acutely obſerved, the 'ſixth trumpet comes immediately after the fifth, as well 'as the ſeventh after the ſixth; and therefore it cannot 'be diſtinguiſhed from the others by its immediate ſuc-'ceſſion, which is common to them all; but by the 'ſpeed of its motions and the quickneſs of its events[44].'

That the vials will be poured out rapidly, ſeems to be countenanced by the 8th verſe of the xviiith ch. of St. John, where that prophet, when ſpeaking of the ſym-

[42] Publiſhed in London in 4to. in 1684, p. 187.

[43] See p. 380, 506. [44] On ch. xi. 14.

bolic

bolic Babylon, ſays, *her plagues ſhall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine.* Againſt the opinion, that the vials will be poured out with a conſiderable degree of rapidity, the word *vial* may itſelf appear to militate; for, as it ſignifies a veſſel with a narrow mouth, it would ſeem to denote, that God's wrath will be poured out not all at once, but ſlowly, and by little and little. But the objection has no ſolid foundation. The fact is, the word *vial* is an improper rendering; for it communicates to the mind of the Engliſh reader an idea entirely different from that which the Greek original ſuggeſts. On this point it will be ſufficient to appeal to two of the moſt learned of the commentators. 'We have 'proved,' ſays Daubuz[45], that φιαλη, the word here uſed, 'is a bowl or baſin proper for libations, to pour the 'liquor contained *all at once.*' A φιαλη 'is ſuppoſed by 'all interpreters,' ſays Vitringa[46], 'to have certainly had 'the ſhape of *a cup*, and this has lately, by a certain 'writer of eminent learning, been very clearly demon-'ſtrated[47].' It is manifeſt then, that the word under conſideration, inſtead of favouring the alleged objection, when examined, favours the expectation, that theſe divine judgments will be rapidly executed.

[45] P. 681. [46] P. 689.

[47] Braunio, Select. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 5, ſect. 64, 65.

CHAPTER

# CHAPTER XXII.

## ON A MEMORABLE PREDICTION DELIVERED BY CHRIST.

THERE is a paſſage, leading to the ſame concluſions with the prophecies, which have been alleged in chapters xviii. and xx. from Daniel and from John, which is ſanctioned by a yet higher name. It is the prediction of CHRIST himſelf. Certainly therefore it claims more than ordinary attention: and, in order that it may be examined fairly, I muſt entreat the reader to diveſt himſelf, as much as poſſible, of any preconceived notions reſpecting the meaning of the expreſſions that occur in it; and to aſk himſelf, whether theſe notions are the reſult of enquiry, or whether they have been taken up, haſtily and inconſiderately, either from a deference to the authority of commentators, or from an attention to the mere ſound of the words. In the obſervations to be made upon this prophecy, I ſhall in many points follow JOSEPH MEDE. And what is his character? He is introduced to the reader by bp. Hurd (to the ſcholar indeed he could be no ſtranger), as 'a 'ſublime genius,—ſolely devoted to the love of truth, 'and to the inveſtigation of it. His learning,' declares the prelate, 'was vaſt, but well choſen and well di-'geſted; and his underſtanding, in no common degree, 'ſtrong and capacious[1].'

The predictions of the xxivth ch. of Matthew, ſays Dr. Jortin, 'may perhaps prefigure the deſtruction of

[1] Vol. II. p. 122.

'antichriſtian Tyranny[2], and the manifeſtation of Chriſt, 'that is, of his power and ſpirit; and then may com-'mence a better and happier æra, and ſuch a renova-'tion, as may be called *New Heavens* and *a New Earth*, '*wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs*[3].' But the reader will, I hope, in the courſe of the work, ſee reaſon to believe, not only that they are *prefigured*, but that they are *expreſsly and primarily foretold*; and will aſſent to the opinion of Daubuz and of Dr. Lancaſter with reſpect to theſe predictions. The former in his Commentary, and the latter in his Symbolical Dictionary, obſerve (and I am ſorry that their incidental introduction of the paſſage permitted them not to be more copious on the ſubject), that when Jeſus ſaid (Mat. xxiv. 29), that '*the Powers of* '*the Heavens ſhall be ſhaken*, it is eaſy to conceive that 'he meant, that THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD 'SHOULD BE OVERTHROWN TO SUBMIT TO HIS 'KINGDOM[4].'

Our Lord's words are theſe: *Immediately after the tribulation of thoſe days ſhall the ſun be darkened, and the moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken*[5]. 'Certainly our Saviour,' ſays Joſeph Mede, here 'uſeth a *prophetical* expreſſion.' It cannot, as he ſhews, be *literally* underſtood. 'Whither,' he aſks, 'ſhall the ſtars fall from heaven, which are either as big, 'or many times bigger, than the globe of the earth? 'Where ſhall there be room for them[6]?'

[2] In like manner, Dr. Wells ſays, that Mat. xxiv. 29 may *ſecondarily* be underſtood of the final deſtruction of the antichriſtian ſtate.

[3] Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. I. p. 225.

[4] Daubuz, p. 161. [5] Mat. xxiv. 29.

[6] P. 761. One of Mede's moſt illuſtrious contemporaries, Hugo Grotius, omits not to obſerve, that to the expreſſions of this verſe a ſymbolic meaning *muſt* be annexed.

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This point then being taken for granted, it next remains to enquire, what is the eſtabliſhed acceptation of the ſublime ſymbols which our Lord has employed. There are two ways of aſcertaining their meaning. *Firſt*, by conſulting parallel paſſages; *ſecondly*, by ſeeking the interpretation as given by writers of acknowledged eminence.

I begin with a parallel paſſage. In the viiith ch. of the book of Revelation it is ſaid: *and the fourth angel ſounded, and the third part of the ſun was ſmitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the ſtars; ſo as the third part of them was darkened.* I now tranſcribe the words of Mr. Pyle's paraphraſe. 'The fourth angel ſounded the complete fall of this 'apoſtate Weſtern empire, and an end of the very name 'and title of the Roman Cæſars. This was repreſented 'to me by a darkneſs ſpread over *the ſun, moon,* and '*ſtars*; that is to ſay, the ruin of its monarchy; of its 'prince, nobles, ſubordinate magiſtrates and powers. 'And thus it was fulfilled, in this Empire of Europe, 'ſtyled the third part of the then known world.' That the fourth trumpet predicts 'the aboliſhing of the whole 'Roman majeſty, in their ſenate, conſuls, and preſi-'dents; the ſun and moon in thoſe parts having no light 'remaining,' is the declaration of Mede[7]. 'There is no 'longer,' ſays Dr. H. More, 'any king of Rome, de-'noted by the ſun, nor conſular power, nor ſenatorian, 'nor the power of other known ancient magiſtrates of 'Rome, denoted by the moon and ſtars.' 'This fourth 'trumpet,' ſays Mr. Whiſton, 'eclipſes the European 'ſun, moon, and ſtars, i. e. it extinguiſhes the Weſtern 'emperor and his ſubordinate governors[8].' From the

[7] P. 738. [8] P. 166.

general harmony of the commentators on this ſubject, a crowd of ſimilar paſſages might be produced.

I am next to enquire, *what is the interpretation given to our Lord's ſymbols by writers of acknowledged eminence.* After remarking, that it is admitted on all hands, that our Lord did certainly ſometimes employ the word *heaven* in a ſymbolic ſenſe[9]; I ſhall, on the import of that expreſſion, extract an obſervation from Dr. Lancaſter, though indeed his opinion reſpecting it has been ſlightly referred to in a note, which was introduced in ch. ix. According to the extent of the ſubject, 'Heaven 'ſignifies, ſymbolically, the Ruling Power or Govern-'ment; that is, the whole aſſembly of the ruling powers, 'which, in reſpect of the ſubjects or *earth*, are *a politi-'cal heav.n*, being over and ruling the ſubjects, as the 'natural heaven ſtands over and rules the earth.' 'Mighty changes and revolutions,' bp. Newton more briefly obſerves, 'according to the prophetic ſtyle, are 'expreſſed by great commotions in the earth and in the 'heavens[10].' 'In the prophetic language,' ſays Dr. Sykes, '*the heavens* are put for the higher powers, and 'thoſe who enjoy great dignities and honours[11].' In like manner Joſeph Mede, in the paragraph which follows his citation of our Lord's prophecy, declares, that, in the diction of ſcripture, the political world is ſometimes ſpoken of as having *an earth* and *a heaven*, with a figurative hoſt of 'kings, princes, peers[12].' Mr. Townſon, ſpeaking of the verſe under conſideration, ſays, 'this is the ſymbolical language of prophecy to ſignify 'the ruin of great perſonages and kingdoms[13];' Brenius aſſerts, that the ſymbols employed in it are every where

[9] As in his prediction about the fate of Capernaum. Luke x. 15.
[10] Vol. III. p. 56. [11] On Heb. xii. 26.
[12] P. 761. [13] *On the Goſpels*, 4to. p. 99.

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uſed to denote the overthrow of kingdoms and a mighty revolution in human affairs; and it is declared by Dr. Wall, that 'by theſe names of *ſun*, *moon*, *ſtars*, falling, 'are ſo conſtantly meant temporal powers, kings, 'princes, governments, that we *muſt* underſtand' them ſo here[14]. Sir Iſaac Newton indeed lays it down as a matter to be taken for granted, that 'in ſacred prophecy, 'which regards not ſingle perſons, THE SUN IS PUT 'FOR THE WHOLE SPECIES AND RACE OF 'KINGS, in the kingdom or kingdoms of the world 'politic, ſhining with regal power and glory[15].' 'The '*ſun*,' ſays Vitringa, 'in the prophetic diction ſignifies 'kings ſhining with great majeſty[16].' 'Kings and 'princes,' obſerves Mr. Lowth, are 'expreſſed in the pro-'phetical ſtyle by the name of ſun, moon and ſtars[17].' The learned Dr. John Owen, who was dean of Chriſt's Church and vice-chancellor of Oxford, ſays, 'you may 'take it for a rule, that in the denunciations of the judg-'ments of God, through all the prophets, *heavens*, *ſun*, '*moon*, *ſtars*—are taken for governments, governors, 'dominions in political ſtates[18].' 'The holy prophets,' ſays bp. Warburton, 'call kings and empires by the 'names of the heavenly luminaries;' and a little farther he adds, '*ſtars falling* from the firmament are employed 'to denote the deſtruction of the nobility[19].' In like manner Sir I. Newton ſays, '*the ſtars* are put for ſubor-'dinate princes and great men.' This long liſt of teſti-monies I ſhall conclude by ſtating the opinion of an

[14] *Crit. Notes on the New Teſt.* 1730, p. 31. Dr. Wall would interpret Mat. xxiv. 29, of the overthrow of the Jewiſh princes and prieſts, or of the fall of the Roman empire.

[15] P. 17. [16] In Apoc. xvi. 8. [17] On Iſa. xxiv. 21.

[18] *A Complete Col.* of his *Serm.* fol. 1721. p. 322.

[19] Divine Legat. of Moſes, vol. II. p. 152.

illuſtrious Jew of the 12th century. Moſes Maimonides, in commenting on thoſe words of Iſaiah (xxxiv. 4), *the hoſt of heaven ſhall be diſſolved*, and in obſerving that *ſtars*, in the ſymbolic diction of prophecy, ſignify men of rank and dignity, declares it to be ſo clear and evident, that he ſhould not have thought it neceſſary to have ſaid a ſingle word on the import of theſe expreſſions, had not ſome very improperly annexed to them a literal interpretation[20].

I may add, that, in the ſymbolic language of antiquity, *the ſun* always ſtood for a monarch or for monarchy; whilſt *the moon* and *the ſtars* repreſented perſons of inferior but elevated rank in the ſtate[21]. In proof of this I ſhall tranſlate, as doctors More and Lancaſter have done, from the Greek[22] of Achmet. 'According to 'the Indians, Perſians, and Egyptians, *the ſun* is inva- 'riably interpreted of the perſon of the king, and *the* 'moon of him who is next in power to him; Venus re- 'fers to the queen, and the other ſtars of largeſt magni- 'tude to thoſe who are greateſt with the ſovereign[23].' Again in the next chapter, ſpeaking of the mode of interpretation eſtabliſhed in Perſia and in Egypt, he ſays,

[20] *More Nevochim*, a Buxtorfio, Baſ. 1629, p. 267. It is of this celebrated Jew, who lived in Egypt as phyſician to the Soldan, that Caſaubon, after declaring him to have been 'a man of great abilities and of ſound 'learning,' ſays (*Exercit. contra Baron.* xvi. 77), that 'he was the firſt of 'his tribe who ceaſed to be a trifler.' His profound knowledge of the Hebrew ſcriptures admits not of diſpute.

[21] 'In hieroglyphic writing *the ſun*, *moon*, and *ſtars* were uſed to repre- 'ſent ſtates and empires, kings, queens, and nobility.' Warburton's Div. Legat. of Moſes, vol. II. p. 152.

[22] By ſaying this, I mean not to decide on the queſtion, whether the treatiſe of Achmet was originally written in the language of Greece or of Arabia. Moſt probably it is a tranſlation from the Arabic.

[23] Achmetis Oneirocritica, cap. 167.

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'the multitude of the other greateſt *ſtars* are to be re-
'ferred to the men of nobility and opulence, and thoſe
'who in every place live neareſt to the king.'

After what has been ſaid, the mode of interpreting the alleged prophecy of Chriſt appears pointed out to us with abundant clearneſs. Since it is not only agreed, that St. John's prediction of a third part of the ſun, moon, and ſtars being darkened, over the meaning of which a light has been thrown by its fulfilment, ſignifies the overthrow of the eſtabliſhed government in a third part of the known world; but it is alſo on all hands admitted, that theſe ſymbols have ever been regarded as the eſtabliſhed repreſentatives of monarchy and nobility; when our Lord ſolemnly declares, that *the ſun ſhall be darkened, and the moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven*; we are juſtly authoriſed to conclude, according to all the rules of conſiſtent criticiſm and legitimate interpretation, that the holy founder of our religion has foretold the complete deſtruction of all the eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of oppreſſion, which kings and nobles may any where uphold. The expreſſion is manifeſtly prophetical. It is general; not being limited to any country in particular; nor reſtricted, as in the foregoing citation from St. John, to a third part of the ſun and the ſtars.

Of Campegius Vitringa I have before had occaſion to ſpeak in the higheſt terms. In truth, the depth of his knowledge, and the extent of his celebrity, as an interpreter of prophetic ſcripture, are not ſurpaſſed by any commentator of any age or any country[24]. I am, therefore, particularly happy in finding, that his decided opinion reſpecting the *time* when this prophecy is to be

[24] *Longe doctiſſimus interpres*, is the honourable epithet by which biſhop Lowth diſtinguiſhes the name of Vitringa. *De Sacra Poeſi Hebræorum Prælectiones.* Oxon. 1763. p. 272.

fulfilled, and the *nature* of the events which it points out, is in perfect agreement with the ideas which I myſelf had formed. This part of our Lord's prophecy does, he declares, refer to the deſtruction of the anti-chriſtian princes in the war of Armageddon, and to the great events foretold by St. John under the emblems of the harveſt, the vintage, and the ſixth ſeal[25].

But I ſhall be aſked, does this moſt illuſtrious of the prophets himſelf *ſpecify* any *time*; and, if ſpecified, does it correſpond with what has before been gathered from Daniel and from John? I anſwer, that it perfectly does. *The ſun ſhall be darkened*, ſays our Lord, *immediately after the tribulation of thoſe days*. Now what are thoſe days, and when do they terminate? The incomparable Mr. Mede (I uſe the epithet of biſhops Hurd and Hallifax), in ſpeaking of the Jews and of this paſſage, ſays, 'This great tribulation, ſuch as never na-'tion ſuffered, is not to be confined to their calamity at 'the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, but extends to the whole 'time of their captivity and diſperſion from that time 'unto this preſent not yet ended[26].' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks that eminent Dutch divine, Epiſcopius, in his commentary on Matthew: and in like manner archbiſhop Tillotſon has obſerved, that the prophecy of Jeſus reſpecting the ſufferings of his countrymen 'compre-'hends from the deſtruction of Jeruſalem all the time of 'the captivity of the Jews among the Gentiles, which 'we ſee is not yet expired;' and that when it is ſaid *the ſun ſhall be darkened*, &c. *after the tribulation of thoſe days*,

[25] See Vitringa *in Apoc.* p. 279; and *in Jeſai*, vol. II. p. 276, 277. Elſewhere alſo Vitringa declares (*in Jeſai*, vol. II. p. 23), that *the ſun*, *moon*, and *ſtars* are to be underſtood, in this paſſage of Matthew, of political and eccleſiaſtical governors.

[26] P. 920.

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the meaning is, this ſhall happen, 'when God hath made 'an end of puniſhing the nation of the Jews[27].'

It has alſo been thought, that theſe words relate not to the deſcendants of Abraham alone. The expreſſion, '*the tribulation of thoſe days*, includes,' ſays Mat. Henry, 'not only the deſtruction of Jeruſalem[28], but 'all the other tribulations which *the church* muſt paſs 'through;' and thus it is to be extended as well to the Chriſtians as to the Jews. That it is to be applied to the ſufferings of the Chriſtian church was the decided opinion of Vitringa[29]. Such likewiſe was the ſentiment of Theophylact[30] and of Chryſoſtom. I now cite the words of the latter. 'Of *the tribulation* of what days 'is he ſpeaking? That of Antichriſt and of falſe teach-'ers[31].' And there are not wanting reaſons for believing, that when our Lord ſaid, two or three verſes before (v. 24), that *there ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts and falſe teachers*[32], he alluded to that long period of antichriſtian ſuperſtition, which has darkened Chriſtendom for ſo many centuries; and that this is the period reſpecting which he ſpeaks from the beginning of v. 23 to the end of v. 28. 'Many learned interpreters of our times,' ſays Vitringa, 'with whoſe opinion my ſentiments coin-'cide, think that our Lord ſummarily relates here, not 'only the extirpation of Judaiſm, but likewiſe the more 'eminent events of his church, even to the cloſe of the 'αιων[33].'

[27] Serm. 183.

[28] 'Some interpreters,' ſays Calvin, 'raſhly underſtand *the tribulation of* 'thoſe days as relating to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem alone.'

[29] In Apoc. p. 279.

[30] Vid. in loc. et in Mark, c. xiii. [31] Homil. in loc.

[32] In the very valuable tranſlation of Mr. Wakefield, *teachers* is the word employed. *Prophets* is the word admitted into the common verſion.

[33] In Apoc. p. 230. After the reader ſhall have peruſed the xxviith chapter of the preſent work, he will diſcern the reaſon, why Vitringa has incorporated into the ſentence quoted above the Greek expreſſion, τὴν συντελειαν τȣ αἰωνος. But,

But, in order to make Chriſt's prediction more plain, I ſhall, from Matthew, again cite his words, together with a part of the parallel place in Luke. I begin with Matthew. *Immediately after the tribulation of thoſe days ſhall the ſun be darkened, and the moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken.—And they ſhall ſee the ſon of man coming in the clouds of heaven*[34] *with power and great glory.* From the xxiſt ch. of Luke we learn, that *the tribulation of thoſe days* has a very extenſive meaning, and that it eſpecially ſignifies the treading down of Jeruſalem and Judea by the Gentiles, which ſhall not terminate till the times of the Gentiles are accompliſhed; for ſuch is the import of his words. *This people*, i. e. the Jews, *ſhall be led away captive into all nations: and Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there ſhall be ſigns in the ſun, and in the moon, and in the ſtars.* In the next and two following verſes the evangeliſt adds, that *the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken. And then ſhall they ſee the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when theſe things begin to come to paſs, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.* From a compariſon of theſe two paſſages in Matthew and in Luke, it appears evident, that *the tribulation of thoſe days*, mentioned by the former of theſe apoſtolic writers, reaches to the whole period, during which *Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden of the Gentiles.* Now bp. Newton obſerves in one of his Diſſertations on our Lord's prophecy, that *the times of the Gentiles* will *be fulfilled*, 'when the times of *the four great kingdoms* of the Gen-

[34] Mat. xxiv. 29, 30. That *the coming of the ſon of man in the clouds of heaven* needs not to be literally underſtood, and that it has no reference to the end of the world, will be ſhewn in ch. xxx.

tiles

'tiles according to Daniel's prophecies ſhall be ex-'pired[35].' At length then we are able to form ſome ideas of the time, when the prediction of Jeſus is to be accompliſhed. We collect, from the compariſon of the evangeliſts, that the events pointed out by him, under the ſymbols of the darkening of *the ſun*, *the moon*, and *the ſtars*, whatever import theſe ſymbols may be ſuppoſed to have, are to happen when *the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*; that is to ſay, are contemporary with the demolition of the antichriſtian governments of the European world, as foretold by Daniel. But the meaning of theſe ſymbols has been ſatisfactorily aſcertained; and hence it appears, that Daniel and Chriſt have preſignified the ſame great cataſtrophe. And certainly it is no ſubject of ſurpriſe, that the downfal of all thoſe monarchies and ariſtocracies, which oppreſs the world, ſhould have been predicted, ſince it was foreſeen by the Divine Mind; not only that *ſome* of them would vehemently reſiſt the firſt propagation of the religion of Jeſus; but that *all* of them, during a long ſeries of ages, and during the whole of their continuance in power, even though they profeſſed to be converts to it, would in fact be altogether ſtrangers to its ſpirit, and openly violating all its laws would be alike injurious to the practice and to the ſpread of Chriſtianity.

But I haſten to conclude. If then it be evident, as well from a conſultation of the prophetic ſcriptures themſelves, as from the opinions of the moſt approved writers, that the ſun, the moon, and the ſtars are, in the diction of prophecy, the known, eſtabliſhed ſymbols either of a monarch and his nobles, or of monarchy and ariſtocracy in general; if what bp. Hurd affirms be in any degree well founded, that 'there is, in truth, no

[35] Vol. II. p. 314.

'more

'more difficulty in fixing the import of the prophetic 'ſtyle, than of any other language or technical phra-'ſeology whatever[36]:' ſurely I ſhall not be charged, even by the advocate of tyranny, with having annexed this ſenſe to the words of our Saviour on grounds, which are altogether light and doubtful and deſtitute of authority.

If the reaſon be aſked, whence this paſſage has not been oftner viewed in the ſame light, and whence it has happened, that NOT ONE of the many Engliſh commentators on the Evangeliſts has thus interpreted it; I reply, without aſſigning any motives of policy as having communicated to the minds of any among them a ſecret bias, that thoſe of them who have moſt ſucceſsfully illuſtrated the Evangeliſts, and have been followed by the tribe of inferior expoſitors, have rarely paid any marked attention to *the ſymbols of the prophets*, and therefore it is not to be wondered, that, when they have incidentally met with them, they have not turned out of their uſual track, and have in conſequence miſinterpreted them, as if they were expreſſions not *prophetic* but *literal*[37]. That this is a true ſolution of the difficulty, the reader will ſee ſolid grounds for believing, when he recollects, that the alleged interpretation of our Lord's words has received the unanimous ſuffrage of Daubuz, of Lancaſter, and of Vitringa[38]; who are perhaps the three men, who of all others

[36] Vol. II. p. 98. See ſimilar aſſertions in More (On the Apoc. p. 304) and Lancaſter (p. 19). 'Each ſymbol,' ſays the lateſt of all the commentators on the apocalypſe, 'has as determinate and diſtinct a meaning, as 'each word in other languages hath.' Johnſton of Holywood, vol. I. p. 41.

[37] If Grotius and Gilbert Wakefield be excepted, I know not a ſingle commentator on the Evangeliſts, who appears to have been at all acquainted with the important works of Achmet and Artemidorus.

[38] I add not the name of Mede, on account of the doubts he entertained, and

others *beſt underſtood the ſymbolic language of prophecy*, and had *moſt diligently compared together the predictions of different prophets*.

and becauſe he delivered no *poſitive* opinion on the ſubject. Mede's ideas on the xxivth ch. of Matthew I ſhall have farther occaſion to ſtate in the xxviith and xxviiith chapters of the work.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXII.

THE whole of the preſent work was written, and a conſiderable part of it printed, previouſly to my meeting with the quotation that follows. The principal motives for my now introducing it are, becauſe many of the thoughts which it contains are ſimilar to thoſe that predominate in the preceding pages; and becauſe it proceeds from the pen of a courtier and a dignitary of the church, whoſe mind will not be ſuſpected to have yielded admiſſion to any ideas of the probability of a Revolution in the circumſtances of mankind, from a reſtleſs temper or a fondneſs for innovation, from the influence of prejudices favourable to freedom, or from a diſſatisfaction at the exiſting ſtate of affairs. It is from a charge[39] delivered by biſhop Porteus.

'The preſent times,' ſays the prelate, 'and the preſent 'ſcene of things, in almoſt every part of the civilized 'world, are the moſt intereſting and the moſt awful that 'were ever before preſented to the inhabitants of the 'earth; and ſuch as muſt neceſſarily excite the moſt

[39] A Charge, delivered to the Clergy of the Dioceſe of London, at the Viſitation of that Dioceſe in the year 1794, by Beilby, Lord Biſhop of London.

'ſerious

'ſerious reflections in every thinking mind. Perhaps 'all thoſe ſingular events to which we have been wit-'neſſes, unparalleled as they undoubtedly are in the 'page of hiſtory, may be only the *beginning* of things, 'may be only the firſt leading ſteps to a train of events 'ſtill more extraordinary; to the accompliſhment poſſibly 'of ſome new and unexpected, and at preſent unfatho-'mable, deſigns hitherto reſerved and hid in the counſels 'of the Almighty. Some we know there are who think 'that certain prophecies, both in the New Teſtament 'and the Old, are now fulfilling; that *the ſigns of the 'times* are portentous and alarming; and that the ſud-'den extinction of a great monarchy, and of all the 'ſplendid ranks and orders of men that ſupported it, 'is only the completion in part of that prediction in 'the goſpel, that *the ſun ſhall be darkened, and the 'moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall 'from heaven*, before the ſecond appearance of the 'Meſſiah, to judge the earth; all which expreſſions are 'well known to be only figurative emblems of the great 'powers and rulers of the world, whoſe deſtruction, 'it is ſaid, is to precede that great event. As to myſelf 'I pretend not to decide on theſe arduous points; I pre-'tend not either to propheſy or to interpret prophecy: 'nor ſhall I take upon myſelf to pronounce, whether 'we are now approaching (as ſome think) to the Millen-'nium, or to the Day of Judgment, or to any other 'great and tremendous and univerſal change predicted 'in the ſacred writings. But this I am ſure of, that the 'preſent unexampled ſtate of the Chriſtian world is a 'loud and powerful call upon all men, but upon us 'above all men, to take peculiar heed to our ways, and 'to prepare ourſelves,—for every thing that may befall 'us, be it ever ſo novel, ever ſo calamitous[40].'

[40] P. 28.

CHAP.

# CHAPTER XXIII.

## ON THE SIX FIRST SEALS, AND PARTICULARLY THE THIRD AND THE SIXTH.

THERE are two paſſages in the two ſublimeſt of the ſcriptural prophets, one in John, and one in Iſaiah, which are juſtly obſerved by Pyle[1], Brenius[2], and Vitringa[3], to be parallel places with the memorable prediction of our Saviour, which was illuſtrated in the preceding chapter. They are too important to be omitted. As the prophecy of Jeſus has, however, been ſo largely inveſtigated, the ſymbolic language in which they are written will not very long detain our attention.

Of theſe paſſages, the firſt which I ſhall tranſcribe and explain, is the prediction of THE SIXTH SEAL: and, in order that a juſt conception of it may be formed, it will be neceſſary to introduce ſome account of the five preceding ſeals. The extract that follows is from bp. Newton. 'Future events are ſuppoſed by St. 'John, as well as by Daniel and other prophets, in a 'beautiful figure, to be regiſtered in a book, for the 'greater certainty of them. This book (ver. 1)[4] is *in 'the right hand of God*, to denote that as he alone directs 'the affairs of futurity, ſo he alone is able to reveal them. '—It was alſo *ſealed*, to ſignify that the decrees of 'God are inſcrutable, and ſealed *with ſeven ſeals*, refer-'ring to ſo many ſignal periods of prophecy. In ſhort 'we ſhould conceive of this book, that it was ſuch an

[1] P. 48. [2] In Mat. xxiv. 29.
[3] In Apoc. p. 281; and in Jeſai, vol. II. p. 23. [4] Ch. v.

'one

'one as the ancients uſed, a volume or roll of a book, 'or more properly a volume conſiſting of ſeven volumes, 'ſo that the opening of one ſeal laid open the contents 'only of one volume[5].'

Since this ſealed book is deſcribed as not being opened till after great preparation[6]; ſince Chriſt is repreſented in the prophetic viſion as ſelected to perform this important taſk; and innumerable multitudes of angels, and the repreſentatives of the whole Chriſtian church, are introduced as raiſing acclamations of joy on the diſcloſure of its contents[7]; it may reaſonably be expected to foretell events, which ſhould be highly intereſting to the Chriſtian world, and WHICH, DURING THE REVOLUTION OF FUTURE AGES, SHOULD HAVE A SIGNAL INFLUENCE, EITHER FAVOURABLE OR UNFAVOURABLE, UPON THE PROGRESS AND UPON THE PURITY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. But ſuch is the interpretation of the ſeven ſeals, which is adopted by biſhop Newton and many other commentators, as altogether to diſappoint theſe expectations. *The firſt ſeal*, or period, ſays the biſhop of Briſtol, denoted the conqueſts of Veſpaſian and Titus; and *the ſecond* thoſe ſlaughters which occurred in the time of Trajan and his immediate ſucceſſors; *the third* was predictive of the meaſures adopted by the two emperors of the name of Severus; and *the fourth* of that mortality and thoſe various devaſtations, which diſtinguiſhed the reigns of Maximin and the princes who ſucceeded. According to this explication, theſe prophecies, each of which Chriſt is repreſented as opening to view, had no nearer relation to the Chriſtian than to the Pagan ſubjects of the Roman empire. But to entertain a ſuppoſition like this, to repreſent that

[5] Vol. III. p. 35. [6] Ch. v. v. 1—7.
[7] V. 8—14.

four

four volumes of the divine communications were of such a complexion as to be incapable of being applied to the benefit of the church, is, says Vitringa, to support an hypothesis that is at variance with reason[8]. Reason, indeed, teaches us to expect, says this distinguished commentator, that, when the sealed book is divided into seven volumes or periods, *some proportion* between the length of these periods should be preserved[9]. But bp. Newton and those who coincide with him[10] represent, that all the six first[11] seals were fulfilled between the reign of Vespasian and the death of the emperor Theodosius, a period of only 325 years, whilst the seventh seal alone was to run on from that time, through a long succession of centuries, to the end of the world. Some sort of proportion also might be expected to be found with respect to the length of the visions themselves[12]. But according to bp. Newton, the account of the seventh seal, and of what is contained under it, fills *four entire chapters* of the apocalypse; whilst the description of the other seals for the most part occupies only *two or three verses*. The fact is, says Vitringa, and it is the opinion of Daubuz, of the celebrated Cocceius, and of many others[13], that the seven trumpets, described in chapters viii, ix, and xi, are by no means to be included under the seventh seal, but constitute a new series of distinct visions. Independently of these objections, Vitringa has decisively proved, that the advocates of the hypothesis under consideration have in *applying* the emblems of

[8] P. 232. [9] P. 231.

[10] Lest I should lead the reader into mistake, I remind him, that Vitringa wrote earlier than bp. Newton, and therefore had not him in view, but other commentators of similar sentiments.

[11] The first seal, according to bp. Newton, occupies the scanty term of about 28 years.

[12] See Vitringa, p. 226. [13] See Vitringa, p. 319.

the prophet to particular events, been ſingularly unſucceſsful. Thus for inſtance, when it is ſaid in the delineation of the ſecond ſeal, that *there went out another horſe that was red: and power was given to him that ſat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they ſhould kill one another: and there was given unto him a great ſword:* theſe emblems are pronounced to be prophetic of the events which happened in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, a period which was in fact diſtinguiſhed by a more than common portion of tranquillity and general proſperity. But, ſays Vitringa, if theſe ſymbols *are* to be applied to the wars which the Romans carried on with other nations, 'would not the aſpect of that period, 'when the Roman empire was on all ſides haraſſed by 'the Goths and Scythians, the Perſians and Germans, 'about the times of Decius and Gallus, and was almoſt 'oppreſſed by theſe nations, be far more ſuitably ex-'preſſed by the ſymbolic figure of *a red horſe*[14], than the 'happy times of Trajan and Hadrian[15]?' Improbable as this interpretation is on the very face of it, it may boaſt the patronage of a crowd of expoſitors, and theſe too reſpectable. Does not this ſerve to ſhew, what I

[14] VI. 4. That *a red horſe* and *a ſword* are the ſymbols of ſlaughter, the commentators unite in obſerving.

[15] P. 233. 'If a man were called to fix the period in the hiſtory of the 'world, during which the condition of the human race was moſt happy 'and proſperous, he would,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'without heſitation, name 'that which elapſed from the death of Domitian to the acceſſion of Com-'modus. The vaſt extent of the Roman empire was governed by abſolute 'power, under the guidance of virtue and wiſdom. The armies were re-'ſtrained by the firm but gentle hand of four ſucceſſive emperors, whoſe 'character and authority commanded involuntary reſpect. The forms of 'the civil adminiſtration were carefully preſerved by Nerva, Trajan, Ha-'drian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and 'were pleaſed with conſidering themſelves as the accountable miniſters of 'the laws.' Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. I. 8vo. 1792, p. 126.

believe

believe is the fact with reſpect to *the generality of commentators*, that they are averſe to the toil of examining for themſelves, and are often ready to adopt the opinions of their predeceſſors with unbecoming ſervility?

By Vitringa the ſeven ſeals are far otherwiſe explained. They are, he ſays, the ſeven Greater Events or important changes, which were to befall the church even to the conſummation of all things; and this explication of them has been embraced and vindicated by a number of very early commentators[16], as well as by many learned men, who, ſubſequent to the æra of the Proteſtant Reformation, have cultivated the ſtudy of the prophetic ſcriptures.

The following account of the ſeals, which is principally extracted from the invaluable commentary of Vitringa, contains only a ſtatement of their accompliſhment; for to enter into an examination of their reſpective ſymbols, would be to depart from the purpoſe of the preſent work. *The firſt ſeal* foretells the brilliant ſucceſs and rapid propagation of the Goſpel, and its long exemption from any extenſive perſecution. Commencing from the publication of the prophecy, it reaches from the reign of Nerva to that of Decius, a period of 150 years. *The ſecond* denotes the efforts which the Pagans afterwards made to extirpate that faith, and thoſe cruel and wide-extending perſecutions, raiſed againſt the profeſſors of it, by the orders of Decius and Valerian, of Diocleſian, Galerius, and Maximin.

[16] Among others, it was adopted by the abbot Joachim in the 12th century, by Pierre d' Olive in the 13th, and by Ubertinus de Caſalis in the 14th. Theſe apocalyptical writers Vitringa entitles *viri eruditi et pii*; and certainly, little as their names are now known, each of them did, in his own time, excite in the world a degree of attention, which it is the fortune of few theologians of the preſent age to obtain. See Vitringa, p. 30, 239; and Moſheim's account of the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries.

With reſpect to the third ſeal, I differ from all former writers; and it is therefore neceſſary, that I ſhould give an account of its ſymbols, as well as of its ſuppoſed completion. That it has been generally miſunderſtood, cannot be denied, for, in their explication of it, the beſt commentators differ extremely. Mede and Goodwin, Grotius and Hammond, Lightfoot, Waple, and Fleming, Vitringa, Bengelius, and the anonymous French author of *the New Syſtem of the Apocalypſe*, Lowman, Johnſton, and Daubuz, ALL differ materially from each other, in their interpretations of the third ſeal; and of theſe commentators, the *twelve* firſt are at variance with each other with reſpect to the time. By every perſon, then, who acknowledges the authority of the apocalypſe, it cannot but be thought a point of ſome conſequence, to aſcertain the ſignification of a prophecy, the import and application of which have hitherto been a ſubject of ſuch general diſpute. It is thus expreſſed: *And when he had opened the third ſeal, I heard the third beaſt ſay, Come and ſee. And I beheld, and lo a black horſe; and he that ſat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midſt of the four beaſts ſay, A meaſure of wheat for a penny, and three meaſures of barley for a penny; and ſee thou hurt not the oil and the wine*[17].

Since the end of the ſecond ſeal or period, and the beginning of the fourth, are fixed by Vitringa[18], thoſe, who adopt his opinion reſpecting the ſeals in general, of

[17] VI. 5, 6. In v. 5 it ought to have been rendered, *I heard the third living creature ſay*; and in v. 6, *I heard a voice in the midſt of the four living creatures.* It is thus in the verſions of Wakefield and Doddridge.

[18] Vitringa regards the third ſeal as a prediction of the numerous theological conteſts, which occurred in the period referred to; of the conſequent ſcarcity of ſpiritual food, that is to ſay, of true doctrines; and of the care, which the governors of the church took accurately to weigh in the theological balance the different opinions which were advanced, and to preſcribe a correct ſtandard of faith.

courſe

courſe know *the period* of the *third* ſeal, previouſly to their examination into the import of its particular ſymbols. The third ſeal then reaches from about the year 324, when Conſtantine obtained the ſole poſſeſſion of the Roman empire, and the religion of Jeſus ceaſed to be attacked by pagan perſecutors, to about the year 629, when the power of the Saracens aroſe, and they firſt waged war againſt Chriſtianity and the emperor of the Eaſt. In order, therefore, to aſcertain the completion of the third ſeal, or the important events predicted to happen in the intervening period, it is neceſſary to ſtate the eſtabliſhed ſignification of the principal ſymbols; and to enquire, by a minute reference to hiſtory, whether that ſtatement aptly correſponds to the general character and the leading events of the period, of which the prophet is ſuppoſed to have given a conciſe deſcription.

'*The horſe*,' ſays Dr. Lancaſter in his Symbolical Dictionary, 'is the ſymbol of war and conqueſt;' and '*black*,' he obſerves, 'ſignifies afflictions, diſaſters, and 'anguiſh[19].' The period, of which the prophet ſpeaks, muſt then have been remarkable for the greatneſs of the conqueſts made in it; and it muſt have been more than uſually calamitous. But there is another prophetic emblem, which will more ſpecifically aſcertain the character of the period. *A* '*balance*, joined with ſymbols, denoting the ſale of corn and fruits by weight,' is, obſerves Dr. Lancaſter, 'the ſymbol of ſcarcity: *bread by weight* 'being a curſe in Lev. xxvi. 26, and in Ezek. iv. 16, 'where it is ſaid, *I will break the ſtaff of bread in Jeru-* '*ſalem, and they ſhall eat bread by weight, and with care,* '*and they ſhall drink water by meaſure, and aſtoniſh-* '*ment*. Which curſe is expreſſed by famine in the ſame

[19] 'In all languages *black* ſignifies any thing that is ſad, diſmal, cruel, 'and unfortunate.' Daubuz in loc.

'prophet ch. v. 16, and ch. xiv. 13[20].' 'Grotius and 'others have,' ſays bp. Newton, obſerved on this ſeal, 'that a *chœnix* of corn, the meaſure here mentioned, 'was a man's daily allowance, as a *penny*[21] was his daily 'wages; ſo that if his daily labour could earn no more 'than his daily bread, without other proviſions for him-'ſelf or his family, corn muſt needs bear a VERY HIGH 'PRICE[22].' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks Mr. Lowman

[20] 'Very many agree in this,' ſays Vitringa, 'that this ſeal is emble-'matic of famine and a ſcarcity of proviſions.' That the third ſeal is pro-phetic of a great ſcarcity of proviſions is obſerved, among other commen-tators, by Goodwin, Lightfoot, and Daubuz.

[21] That is, a Roman *Denarius*.

[22] Notwithſtanding this obſervation of the prelate, he ſeems unaccount-ably to regard the third ſeal as predictive of a period rather of plenty than of want; and declares, that it refers to the two and forty years, which elapſed from the acceſſion of Septimius Severus to the death of Alexander Severus. The prophecy has, alſo, in the opinion of bp. Newton, a parti-cular reference to the conduct of thoſe two emperors, as well as to the ſtate of the Roman empire at that time. What that conduct, and that ſtate of things, was, *the Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* will in-form us. Whenever Septimius Severus 'deviated from the ſtrict line of 'equity, it was generally in favour of the poor and oppreſſed.—The calm 'of peace and proſperity was once more experienced in the provinces; 'and many cities, reſtored by the munificence of Severus, aſſumed the title 'of his colonies, and atteſted by public monuments their gratitude and 'felicity.—And he boaſted with a juſt pride, that, having received the em-'pire oppreſſed with foreign and domeſtic wars, he left it eſtabliſhed in 'profound, univerſal, and honourable peace.' Of this prince it is related, though the account cannot but be regarded as exaggerated, that 'he left in the 'public granaries a proviſion of corn for ſeven years, at the rate of 75,000 '*modii*, or about 2500 quarters a day.' In the reign of Alexander Severus, the provinces 'flouriſhed in peace and proſperity, under the adminiſtra-'tion of magiſtrates, who were convinced by experience, that to deſerve 'the love of the ſubjects, was their beſt and only method of obtaining the 'favour of their ſovereign. While ſome gentle reſtraints were impoſed 'on the innocent luxury of the Roman people, the price of proviſions, 'and the intereſt of money, were reduced, by the paternal care of Alex-'ander.' Vol. I. p. 197, 198, 246. Whether the events of this period do, or do not correſpond, to the emblems of the third ſeal, cannot, I think, be a queſtion of very difficult deciſion.

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in his paraphraſe. 'In the times of this prophecy, the 'price of a meaſure of wheat ſhall be a penny, and three 'meaſures of barley ſhall coſt the ſame price; the whole 'wages of a man's labour for a day, ſhall only purchaſe 'ſo much corn, as is an uſual daily allowance; ſo that 'all he can get muſt be laid out on the very neceſſaries 'of life, without any proviſion of other conveniences for 'himſelf or family, and a ſcarcity of oil and wine[23] will 'make exactneſs in their meaſures very neceſſary alſo.'

Both *the period* of the third ſeal being aſcertained, and *the import of the prophetic ſymbols* diſcovered, it will not, I apprehend, be very difficult to point to thoſe great events, which conſtitute its accompliſhment. It announces, that the Roman empire, which is the theatre

[23] Wine, oil, and corn, together make, ſays Daubuz (in loc.), 'the whole 'product of the fruits of the earth neceſſary for human life.' That oil ſhould be ranked as one of the neceſſaries of life, and claſſed among thoſe things, the want of which would be moſt ſeverely felt, may perhaps be a ground of wonder to the mere Engliſh reader. But ſuch was the fact. Accordingly we find, that in different writers united mention is often made of wine, oil, and corn. Thus in his account of a ſcarcity of proviſions Julius Capitolinus (In Antonin. Pio, c. 8) has this expreſſion, *vini, olei, et tritici penuria*; and the following are the words of Mr. Gibbon (vol. VIII. p. 151), when ſpeaking of the Lombards, 'the buſineſs of agri-'culture, in the cultivation of corn, vines, and olives, was exerciſed with 'degenerate ſkill and induſtry.' 'When the luxurious citizens of An-'tioch complained of the high price of poultry and fiſh, Julian,' as the Engliſh hiſtorian relates (vol. IV. p. 147), 'publicly declared, that a fru-'gal city ought to be ſatisfied with a regular ſupply of wine, oil, and 'bread:' and Mr. Gibbon elſewhere ſays (vol. V. p. 281), 'in the man-'ners of antiquity the uſe of oil was indiſpenſable for the lamp, as well as 'for the bath; and the annual tax, which was impoſed on Africa for the 'benefit of Rome, amounted to the weight of three millions of pounds, 'to the meaſure, perhaps, of three hundred thouſand gallons.' 'Oil,' ſays the preſident Goguet (*Origin of Arts and Sciences*, vol. I. p. 112), 'is 'at leaſt as neceſſary to man as wine, and other liquors of that kind.— 'There are few arts which do not require the uſe of oil.' The ancients 'conſumed vaſt quantities of it, and put it to many more uſes than we do 'at preſent.'

of the events foretold in the ſeven ſeals, ſhall, during the predicted period, a period of about 300 years, be the ſcene of mighty conqueſts: it declares, that the political horizon ſhall be clouded by calamity, and that the inhabitants of the Roman empire ſhall be eſpecially afflicted by an unaccuſtomed ſcarcity of proviſions: and it refers to that mighty revolution produced by the ſucceſſive inundations and numerous victories of the Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns, and the other Barbarians of the North and the Eaſt; who diſmembered the Roman empire, who ſerved as a ſcourge in the hands of God to chaſtize the vices and ſuperſtitions of the Chriſtian world, and who, by deſtroying a very large part of the inhabitants of civilized Europe by means of famine and the ſword, and by embracing a religion of mildneſs and mercy, which they little underſtood, and were little diſpoſed to practiſe, prepared the way for a more complete corruption of the religion of Jeſus, for the conqueſts of the Saracens and the Turks, and for the conſequent extinction of the Chriſtian faith in Mahometan countries.

Having advanced an interpretation of the third ſeal altogether different from any before alleged, it is incumbent on me to bring forward hiſtoric atteſtations in ſupport of it. They are taken from *the Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, a work of incredible diligence, and diſplaying uncommon vigour of mind, but no part of which, we are certain, was intended by its unbelieving author to atteſt the truth, or to illuſtrate the meaning, of prophecy. As the period, characterized by the emblems of the third ſeal, extends over three centuries, I cannot do juſtice to my ſubject, without tranſcribing a long chain of teſtimonies relating to the different parts of that period. But I certainly ſhould not have ventured to have tranſcribed them, were not

not the ſubverſion and diſmemberment of the Roman empire, the conſequent diminution of mankind, and the memorable relapſe of the civilized world into ignorance and barbariſm, events, in themſelves, of the firſt magnitude and importance. I ſhould, however, have been content to have *referred* the reader to Mr. Gibbon's Hiſtory, were not the facts, illuſtrative of the third ſeal, ſcattered over many hundred pages of that work.

It is proper to premiſe, that the evils reſulting from the devaſtation of armies and the dearth of proviſions, cannot all at once aſcend to any very conſiderable height, but muſt be gradual in their progreſs; and it may be remarked, that, as the ravages of famine often ſpread in ſecrecy and ſilence, as the complaints of the poor are frequently ſtifled by the arts of policy and the arm of power, and as occurrences of this kind are totally deſtitute of that variety and ſplendour, which characterize the operations of war and the revolutions of government, they are commonly paſſed over by the hiſtorian unexplained and unrecorded.

As early as the year 331, and when Conſtantine filled the throne of the Roman world, the Goths 'paſſed the 'Danube, and ſpread terror and devaſtation through the 'province of Mæſia. To oppoſe the inroad of this 'deſtroying hoſt, the aged emperor took the field in 'perſon; but on this occaſion either his conduct or 'his fortune betrayed the glory which he had acquired 'in ſo many foreign and domeſtic wars.' About the middle of the fourth century, 'the Barbarians of the 'land and ſea, the Scots, the Picts, and the Saxons, 'ſpread themſelves, with rapid and irreſiſtible fury, 'from the wall of Antoninus to the ſhores of Kent.' And the Illyrian provinces, in the year 357, and in the reign of Conſtantius, the ſon of Conſtantine, were expoſed, 'almoſt without defence, to the light cavalry of the 'Barba-

'Barbarians; and particularly to the inroads of the Quadi, 'a fierce and powerful nation.' But there were other provinces, in the reign of the ſon of Conſtantine, ſtill more oppreſſed by the depredations of the Barbarians. 'In the blind fury of civil diſcord, Conſtantius had 'abandoned to the Barbarians of Germany the countries 'of Gaul, which ſtill acknowledged the authority of 'his rival. A numerous ſwarm of Franks and Ale-'manni were invited to croſs the Rhine by preſents and 'promiſes, by the hopes of ſpoil, and by a perpetual 'grant of all the territories which they ſhould be able 'to ſubdue. But the emperor, who for a temporary 'ſervice had thus imprudently provoked the rapacious 'ſpirit of the Barbarians, ſoon diſcovered and lamented 'the difficulty of diſmiſſing theſe formidable allies, 'after they had taſted the richneſs of the Roman ſoil. 'Regardleſs of the nice diſtinction of loyalty and rebel-'lion, theſe undiſciplined robbers treated as their natu-'ral enemies all the ſubjects of the empire, who poſſeſſed 'any property which they were deſirous of acquiring. 'Forty-five flouriſhing cities, Tongres, Cologne, Treves, 'Worms, Spires, Straſburgh, &c. beſides a far greater 'number of towns and villages, were pillaged, and for 'the moſt part reduced to aſhes.—Fixing their indepen-'dent habitations on the banks of rivers, the Rhine, the 'Moſelle, and the Meuſe, they ſecured themſelves 'againſt the danger of a ſurprize, by a rude and haſty 'fortification of large trees.—The Alemanni were eſtab-'liſhed in the modern countries of Alſace and Lor-'raine; the Franks occupied the iſland of the Batavians, 'together with an extenſive diſtrict of Brabant.—From 'the ſources, to the mouth, of the Rhine, the conqueſts 'of the Germans extended above forty miles to the 'Weſt of that river;—and the ſcene of their devaſ-'tations was three times more extenſive than that of

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'their conqueſts. At a ſtill greater diſtance the open 'towns of Gaul were deſerted, and the inhabitants of 'the fortified cities, who truſted to their ſtrength and 'vigilance, were obliged to content themſelves with 'ſuch ſupplies of corn, as they could raiſe on the vacant 'land within the incloſure of their walls. The dimi-'niſhed legions, deſtitute of pay and proviſions, of arms 'and diſcipline, trembled at the approach, and even at 'the name, of the Barbarians.' In the year 362, it may be added, ſo conſiderable a ſcarcity of corn was felt in Antioch and the cities of Syria, as to generate public diſcontent.

Thirty thouſand Viſigoths, the ſubjects of Hermanric, who reigned from the Euxine to the Baltic, and over the greateſt part of Germany and Scythia, paſſed the Danube in the year 366; 'and the provinces of Thrace 'groaned under the weight of the Barbarians.' Whilſt the maritime provinces of Gaul and Britain, about the year 371, were haraſſed by the Saxons; the Quadi, and a body of Sarmatian cavalry, invaded Pannonia, in the year 374, and in the ſeaſon of harveſt; and 'unmercifully deſtroyed every object of plunder which 'they could not eaſily tranſport[24].'

But every part of the reign of Conſtantine and his immediate ſucceſſors may poſſibly be regarded by ſome perſons, as too early for the commencement of the third ſeal; and indeed I know not, that there is any neceſſity for concluding, that the events foretold in the ſecond ſeal ſhould be *immediately* followed by thoſe prefigured in the third. Prophecies, ſo conciſely expreſſed as the ſeals are, cannot poſſibly deſcribe all the conſiderable events of a long period, but only the principal characteriſtic events. Perhaps, then, the reign of Valens,

[24] Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. III. p. 123, 195, 213; vol. IV. p. 147, 286—329.

and

and the year 376, may form the true epoch, when the events of the third ſeal began to be accompliſhed. In this memorable year the Gothic nation, conſtituting nearly a million of perſons, being driven from their ancient ſeats by an irreſiſtible torrent of other Barbarians, the Huns and the Alani, were permitted by the emperor Valens to croſs the Danube: but fatal were the conſequences which attended that permiſſion, for this immenſe body of Goths, exaſperated by the ill treatment of the Roman officers, did, in this very year, rear the ſtandard of revolt in the provinces of the empire, and defeat an army of Romans.

But on this important æra I ſhall quote *the words* of Mr. Gibbon. 'In the diſaſtrous period of the fall of 'the Roman empire, *which may juſtly be dated from* '*the reign of Valens*, the happineſs and ſecurity of each 'individual were perſonally attacked; and the arts and 'labours of ages were rudely defaced by the Barbarians 'of Scythia and Germany. The invaſion of the Huns 'precipitated on the provinces of the Weſt the Gothic 'nation, which advanced, in leſs than forty years, *from* '*the Danube to the Atlantic*, and opened a way, by the 'ſucceſs of their arms, to the inroads of ſo many hoſtile 'tribes, more ſavage than themſelves.'

It was in the year 376, that the Roman legions, under the command of Lupicinus, one of the governors of Thrace, were completely defeated by the Goths. 'As 'they had been deprived, by the miniſters of the em-'peror, of the common benefits of nature, and the fair 'intercourſe of ſocial life, they retaliated the injuſtice on 'the ſubjects of the empire; and the crimes of Lupicinus 'were expiated by the ruin of the peaceful huſbandmen 'of Thrace, the conflagration of their villages, and the 'maſſacre, or captivity, of their innocent families.' The 'hardy workmen, who laboured in the gold mines

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'of Thrace, for the emolument, and under the laſh, of 'an unfeeling maſter,' having joined the Goths, conducted them, 'through the ſecret paths, to the moſt ſe-'queſtered places, which had been choſen to ſecure the 'inhabitants, the cattle, and the magazines of corn.—'The imprudence of Valens and his miniſters had intro-'duced into the heart of the empire a nation of enemies; 'but the Viſigoths might even yet have been reconciled, 'by the manly confeſſion of paſt errors, and the ſincere 'performance of former engagements. Theſe healing 'and temperate meaſures ſeemed to concur with the timo-'rous diſpoſition of the ſovereign of the Eaſt; but, on 'this occaſion alone, Valens was brave; and his unſea-'ſonable bravery was fatal to himſelf and to his ſubjects.'

Only two years after the admiſſion of the Goths into the Roman empire happened 'the battle of Hadrianople, 'which equalled, in the actual loſs, and far ſurpaſſed, in 'the fatal conſequences, the misfortune which Rome had 'formerly ſuſtained in the fields of Cannæ.—Above 'two-thirds of the Roman army[25] were deſtroyed;' and the emperor Valens, who commanded it in perſon, himſelf periſhed near the field of battle. 'The tide of the 'Gothic inundation rolled from the walls of Hadria-'nople to the ſuburbs of Conſtantinople;—and the Bar-'barians, who had no longer any reſiſtance to apprehend 'from the ſcattered and vanquiſhed troops of the Eaſt, 'ſpread themſelves over the face of a fertile and culti-'vated country, as far as the confines of Italy, and the 'Hadriatic ſea. Their miſchievous diſpoſition was ſhewn 'in the deſtruction of every object, which they wanted 'ſtrength to remove, or taſte to enjoy; and they often 'conſumed, with improvident rage, the harveſts, or the 'granaries, which ſoon afterwards became neceſſary for

[25] About 40,000 Romans fell.

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'their own ſubſiſtence.' It may be added, 'that the 'Goths, after the defeat of Valens, *never* abandoned the 'Roman territory.'

Their devaſtations had a double operation. The conſumption of harveſts, the conflagration of farms, and the maſſacre of huſbandmen, conſtituted only part of the evil. 'The uncertain condition of their property diſ-'couraged the ſubjects of Theodoſius,' the ſucceſſor of Valens, 'from engaging in thoſe uſeful and laborious 'undertakings, which require an immediate expence, 'and promiſe a ſlow and diſtant advantage. The fre-'quent examples of ruin and deſolation tempted them 'not to ſpare the remains of a patrimony, which might, 'every hour, become the prey of the rapacious Goth. 'And the mad prodigality, which prevails in the confu-'ſion of a ſhipwreck or a ſiege, may ſerve to explain the 'progreſs of luxury amidſt the misfortunes and terrors 'of a ſinking nation[26].'

What mighty calamities were inflicted on the Roman empire, during the joint reigns of Arcadius and Honorius, the ſons and ſucceſſors of Theodoſius, every man is apprized, who is acquainted with the hiſtory of its decline and its ſubverſion. On this point there can be no diſpute. To the great events, which happened during their adminiſtration, it will, therefore, be ſufficient very conciſely to refer. During the reigns of the feeble ſons of Theodoſius, Greece was ravaged and over-run by the Goths; Spain and Gaul were invaded and occupied by various tribes of fierce Barbarians; and Italy and Rome were plundered by Alaric, the commander of the Gothic armies. From the long account[27] of theſe varied devaſtations, I ſhall cite only two ſhort extracts. 'The banks

[26] Vol. IV. p. 340—443; vol. V. p. 88.

[27] It extends in vol. V. from p. 176 to p. 362.

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'of the Rhine were crowned, like thoſe of the Tyber,
'with elegant houſes and well cultivated farms.—This
'ſcene of peace and plenty was *ſuddenly* changed into a
'deſert; and the proſpect of the ſmoaking ruins could
'alone diſtinguiſh the ſolitude of nature from the deſola-
'tion of man[28].' The following account of the misfortunes of Spain is in the language of its moſt eloquent hiſtorian, Mariana. "The irruption of theſe nations "was followed by the moſt dreadful calamities: as the "Barbarians exerciſed their indiſcriminate cruelty on "the fortunes of the Romans and the Spaniards; and "ravaged with equal fury the cities and the open "country. The progreſs of famine reduced the miſer-"able inhabitants to feed on the fleſh of their fellow-"creatures,—Peſtilence ſoon appeared, the inſeparable "companion of famine;" and "a large proportion of the "people was ſwept away[29]."

Seven years after the death of Honorius, Africa became the theatre of the moſt terrible devaſtations. 'The 'long and narrow tract of the African coaſt was filled 'with frequent monuments of Roman art and magnifi-'cence.—A ſimple reflection will impreſs every think-'ing mind with the cleareſt idea of fertility and cultiva-'tion: the country was extremely populous; the inhabi-'tants reſerved a liberal ſubſiſtence for their own uſe; 'and the annual exportation, particularly of wheat, was 'ſo regular and plentiful, that Africa deſerved the name 'of the common granary of Rome and of mankind. On 'a ſudden, the ſeven fruitful provinces, from Tangier to 'Tripoli, were overwhelmed by the invaſion of the Van-'dals.—The Vandals, where they found reſiſtance, ſel-'dom gave quarter; and the deaths of their valiant 'countrymen were expiated by the ruin of the cities

[28] Vol. V. p. 225. [29] Gibbon, vol. V. p. 362.

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'under whoſe walls they had fallen.' About the year 442, 'the whole breadth of Europe, as it extends 'above 500 miles from the Euxine to the Hadriatic, 'was at once invaded, and occupied, and deſolated, 'by the myriads of Barbarians whom Attila led into 'the field.—The words, the moſt expreſſive of total 'extirpation and eraſure, are applied to the calamities 'which they inflicted on ſeventy cities of the Eaſtern 'empire.' And, in a ſhort time, the ſituation of Italy itſelf became equally deplorable with that of the provinces. 'Since the age of Tiberius, the decay of agri-'culture had been felt in Italy; and it was a juſt ſubject 'of complaint, that the life of the Roman people de-'pended on the accidents of the winds and waves. In 'the diviſion and the decline of the empire, the tribu-'tary provinces of Egypt and Africa were withdrawn; the 'numbers of the inhabitants continually diminiſhed with 'the means of ſubſiſtence; and the country was exhauſt-'ed by the irretrievable loſſes of war, famine, and peſ-'tilence. St. Ambroſe has deplored the ruin of a popu-'lous diſtrict, which had been once adorned with the 'flouriſhing cities of Bologna, Modena, Regium, and 'Placentia. Pope Gelaſius was a ſubject of Odoacer; 'and he affirms, with ſtrong exaggeration, that in Æmilia, 'Tuſcany, and the adjacent provinces, the human ſpe-'cies was almoſt extirpated[30].'

'While the kingdoms of the Franks and Viſigoths 'were eſtabliſhed in Gaul and Spain, the Saxons at-'chieved the conqueſt of Britain.' But it maintained, alone and unaided, 'a long, a vigorous, though an un-'ſucceſsful ſtruggle, againſt the formidable pirates, who, 'almoſt at the ſame inſtant, aſſaulted the Northern, the 'Eaſtern, and the Southern coaſts.' And 'after a war

[30] Vol. VI. p. 20, 52, 53, 234.

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'of an hundred years, the independent Britons ſtill 'occupied the whole extent of the Weſtern coaſt, from 'the wall of Antoninus to the extreme promontory of 'Cornwall.—Reſiſtance, if it cannot avert, muſt increaſe, 'the miſeries of conqueſt; and conqueſt has never ap- 'peared more dreadful and deſtructive than in the hands 'of the Saxons.' Such, indeed, was the deſtruction of the natives, that 'the Saxon kingdoms diſplayed the face 'of recent diſcovery and cultivation: the towns were 'ſmall, the villages were diſtant; the huſbandry was lan- 'guid and unſkilful; four ſheep were equivalent to an 'acre of the beſt land;' and 'an ample ſpace of wood 'and moraſs was reſigned to the vague dominion of 'nature[31].'

In another part of the globe the Bulgarians diſplayed an equal degree of ferocity. 'The hopes or fears of 'the Barbarians; their inteſtine union or diſcord; the 'accident of a frozen or ſhallow ſtream; the proſpect 'of harveſt or vintage; the proſperity or diſtreſs of 'the Romans, were the cauſes which produced the uni- 'form repetition of annual viſits, tedious in the narrative 'and deſtructive in the event.' The year 539 'was 'marked by an invaſion of the Huns or Bulgarians, 'ſo dreadful, that it almoſt effaced the memory of their 'paſt inroads. They ſpread from the ſuburbs of Con- 'ſtantinople to the Ionian gulph, deſtroyed 32 cities or 'caſtles,—and repaſſed the Danube, dragging at their 'horſes heels 120,000 of the ſubjects of Juſtinian. In 'a ſubſequent inroad they pierced the wall of the Thra- 'cian Cherſoneſus, extirpated the habitations and the 'inhabitants,—and returned to their companions, laden 'with the ſpoils of Aſia,' And Procopius has confi- 'dently affirmed, that, in a reign of 32 years, each *an-*

[31] Vol. VI. p. 379, 386, 388, 392, 395.

'*nual* inroad of the Barbarians conſumed 200,000 of 'the inhabitants of the Roman empire. The entire po- 'pulation of Turkiſh Europe, which nearly correſponds 'with the provinces of Juſtinian, would perhaps be 'incapable of ſupplying ſix millions of perſons, the 'reſult of this incredible eſtimate[32].'

Juſtinian recovered Italy from the Goths, and Africa from the Vandals; but the recovery of loſt provinces was ſometimes as deſtructive to agriculture and to mankind, as the original irruptions of the Barbarians. 'From 'his new acquiſitions, Juſtinian expected that his ava- 'rice, as well as pride, ſhould be richly gratified.' In conſequence the moſt dreadful rebellions agitated Africa. 'For the troubles of Africa, I neither have nor deſire 'another guide than Procopius, whoſe eye contemplated 'the image, and whoſe ear collected the reports, of the 'memorable events of his own times.' He 'has confi- 'dently affirmed, that five millions of Africans were 'conſumed by the wars and government of the emperor 'Juſtinian. The ſeries of the African hiſtory atteſts 'this melancholy truth[33].' After the recovery of Italy, 'Juſtinian might dictate benevolent edicts, and Narſes 'might ſecond his wiſhes by the reſtoration of cities.— 'But the power of kings is moſt effectual to deſtroy: 'and the twenty years of the Gothic war had conſum- 'mated the diſtreſs and depopulation of Italy. As early 'as the fourth campaign, under the diſcipline of Beliſa- 'rius himſelf, 50,000 labourers died of hunger in the '*narrow* region of Miſenum. A ſtill greater number 'was conſumed by famine in the ſouthern provinces, 'without the Ionian gulph. Acorns were uſed in the 'place of bread. Procopius had ſeen a deſerted orphan

[32] Vol. VII. p. 282, 284.

[33] Vol. VII. p. 346, 347, 353. Africa was invaded by the army of Juſtinian in the year 533.

'ſuckled

'ſuckled by a ſhe-goat. Seventeen paſſengers were 'lodged, murdered, and eaten, by two women, who 'were detected and ſlain by the eighteenth.—A ſtrict ex-'amination of the evidence of Procopius would ſwell 'the loſs of Italy above the total ſum of her preſent 'inhabitants[34].'

In the year 542 a terrible plague aroſe, which raged with ſuch fury, 'that many cities of the Eaſt were left 'vacant, and in ſeveral diſtricts of Italy the harveſt and 'the vintage withered on the ground. The triple 'ſcourge of war, peſtilence, and famine, afflicted the 'ſubjects of Juſtinian, and his reign is diſgraced by a 'viſible decreaſe of the human ſpecies, which has never 'been repaired in ſome of the faireſt countries of the 'globe[35].'

Such was the reign of Juſtinian. Whether huſbandry was likely to revive, and plenty to return, during the adminiſtration of his feebler ſucceſſor, the following paſſage reſpecting that prince will aſcertain. 'The annals 'of the ſecond Juſtin are marked with diſgrace abroad 'and miſery at home. In the Weſt, the Roman empire 'was afflicted by the loſs of Italy, the deſolation of 'Africa, and the conqueſts of the Perſians. Injuſtice 'prevailed both in the capital and the provinces; the 'rich trembled for their property, the poor for their 'ſafety.' Italy, however, omitted not to apply to the emperors for relief. From this country, indeed, they 'were inceſſantly tormented by tales of miſery and de-'mands of ſuccour;' and the language of Rome was, "If you are incapable of delivering us from the ſword "of the Lombards, ſave us at leaſt from the calamity of "famine." Though the depopulation of the capital of Italy was conſtant and viſible, 'yet the number of citi-

[34] Vol. VII. p. 400. [35] Vol. VII. p. 423.

'zens ſtill exceeded the meaſure of ſubſiſtence: their 'precarious food was ſupplied from the harveſts of 'Sicily or Egypt; and *the frequent repetition of famine* 'betrays the inattention of the emperor to a diſtant 'province[36].'

The new circumſtances of degradation and depreſſion, into which a conſiderable part of mankind were thrown, gave a ſevere check to the ardour of induſtry. Hence the operations of agriculture became more languid; its produce more ſcanty and uncertain. 'According to the 'maxims of ancient war, the conqueror became the law-'ful maſter of the enemy whom he had ſubdued and 'ſpared: and the fruitful cauſe of perſonal ſlavery, 'which had been almoſt ſuppreſſed by the peaceful 'ſovereignty of Rome, was again revived and multiplied 'by the perpetual hoſtilities of the independent Barba-'rians. The Goth, the Burgundian, or the Frank, who 'returned from a ſucceſsful expedition, dragged after 'him a long train of ſheep, of oxen, and of human cap-'tives, whom he treated with the ſame brutal con-'tempt[37].'

Whether the expeditions of the Barbarians ſucceeded or miſcarried, they were almoſt equally ruinous to the peaceful labours of the huſbandman. To illuſtrate their nature and effects, a ſhort account ſhall be given of the invaſion of Languedoc in the year 586 by the army of the king of Burgundy. 'The troops of Burgundy, 'Berry, Auvergne, and the adjacent territories, were ex-'cited by the hopes of ſpoil. They marched, without 'diſcipline, under the banners of German, or Gallic, 'counts; their attack was feeble and unſucceſsful; but 'the friendly and hoſtile provinces were deſolated with 'indiſcriminate rage. The corn-fields, the villages, the

[36] Vol. VIII. p. 133, 142, 159. [37] Vol. VI. p. 359.

'churches

'churches themſelves, were conſumed by fire; the in-
'habitants were maſſacred or dragged into captivity;
'and, in the diſorderly retreat, 5000 of theſe inhu-
'man ſavages were deſtroyed by hunger or inteſtine
'diſcord[38].'

Often expoſed to a ſiege or to a blockade, cities frequently became the theatres of the moſt dreadful famines. Some facts attendant on ſome of the ſieges of Rome will illuſtrate the aſſertion. When environed by the army of Alaric, it experienced 'the horrid calamities of famine,' at a time when it may fairly be ſuppoſed to have contained twelve hundred thouſand inhabitants. The daily 'allowance of three pounds of bread was reduced to 'one-half, to one-third, to nothing; and the price of 'corn ſtill continued to riſe in a rapid and extravagant 'proportion.—The food the moſt repugnant to ſenſe and 'imagination, the aliments the moſt unwholeſome and 'pernicious to the conſtitution, were eagerly devoured, 'and fiercely diſputed, by the rage of hunger.—Even 'mothers are ſaid to have taſted the fleſh of their ſlaughtered infants. Many thouſands of the inhabitants of 'Rome expired in their houſes, or in the ſtreets, for 'want of ſuſtenance.—And the miſeries of famine were 'ſucceeded and aggravated by a peſtilential diſeaſe.' This was in the year 408. In the year 472, the principal part of Rome, which lay on the Tuſcan ſide of the Tyber, was beſieged by Ricimer; and the public diſtreſs was prolonged 'by a reſiſtance of three months, 'which produced the concomitant evils of famine and 'peſtilence.' In the year 537, the metropolis of the Weſtern empire was beſieged by 150,000 Goths; and, as the ſiege continued more than a year, the people, notwithſtanding the harveſts of Campania and Tuſcany

[38] Vol. VI. p. 374.

had been 'forcibly ſwept for the uſe of the city,—was 'expoſed to the miſeries of ſcarcity, unwholeſome food, 'and contagious diſorders.' But 'if any credit be due 'to an intelligent ſpectator, one third at leaſt of' the Gothic 'hoſt was deſtroyed, in frequent and bloody 'combats under the walls of the city. The bad fame 'and pernicious qualities of the ſummer air might al-'ready be imputed to the decay of agriculture and popu-'lation; and the evils of famine and peſtilence were 'aggravated by their own licentiouſneſs, and the un-'friendly diſpoſition of the country.' Only nine years after this, Rome was again beſieged by the Goths, under the command of Totila, and was deſtined to ſuſtain ſtill ſeverer ſufferings. 'The *medimnus*, or fifth part of the 'quarter of wheat, was exchanged for 7 pieces of gold; '50 pieces were given for an ox, a rare and accidental 'prize;' and 'the progreſs of famine enhanced this ex-'orbitant value.—A taſteleſs and unwholeſome mixture, 'in which the bran thrice exceeded the quantity of 'flour, appeaſed the hunger of the poor; they were 'gradually reduced to feed on dead horſes, dogs, cats, 'and mice, and eagerly to ſnatch the graſs, and even the 'nettles, which grew among the ruins of the city[39].'

That the ſcarcity of corn, wine, and oil, as well as of other proviſions, muſt have been great, muſt have been general, muſt have been permanent in the Roman empire, at a period when the devaſtations of the Northern nations were thus violent, thus extenſive, and thus frequently repeated, can be doubted by no man, who is acquainted with the nature and operations of agriculture, or with the circumſtances that encourage a freedom of commercial intercourſe, or who is accuſtomed to trace the connexion between cauſe and effect.

[39] Vol. V. p. 291; vol. VI. p. 217; vol. VII. p. 235, 237, 243, 263.

After

After having ſo long detained the reader in the contemplation of hiſtory, I ſhall diſmiſs the obſervations on the third ſeal by noticing an objection, which may not improbably be urged againſt the alleged interpretation of it. Though probably it will be readily admitted, that the countries conſtituting the Roman empire were, between the reign of Conſtantine and the commencement of the ſeventh century, in a peculiar degree the theatres of conqueſts and devaſtations, and that no other period of hiſtory, of the ſame length, can by any means be found, in which this was equally the caſe; yet it may be objected, that a ſcarcity of proviſions is a circumſtance of too general a nature, to be regarded as characteriſtic of any particular period. In reply to this, I obſerve, that though there have undoubtedly been other æras, when an alarming deficiency of the neceſſaries of life has been experienced, and that through a great extent of country; yet there are ſolid grounds for concluding, that, from the earlieſt annals of hiſtory to the preſent time, there never was *any period*, in which the inhabitants of the countries, comprehended under the Roman empire, ſuſtained ſo frequent or ſo general a want of proviſions, as in that time, which is ſuppoſed to be referred to by the ſymbols of the third ſeal. The numerous extracts, which I have been tempted to introduce from Mr. Gibbon, will go far to prove this aſſertion; but, in order to furniſh more *complete* evidence of it, it will be neceſſary briefly to allege ſome facts and reaſons, relative both to the centuries which *preceded*, and thoſe which *followed*, the period which the prophet is thought to deſcribe.

Whilſt the Roman empire remained entire; whilſt its frontiers were guarded by the ſtrength of its fortifications and the valour of its legionaries; the labours of agriculture purſued their tranquil and accuſtomed courſe; the rivers, the ſeas, and the excellent roads that ran

through the provinces of the empire, united to ſecure a conſtant, and generally a ſufficient, ſupply of proviſions for all its various inhabitants; the rich harveſts of Egypt and Africa yielded an abundance, greatly ſuperior to their domeſtic wants; and, to uſe the words of Mr. Gibbon[40], 'the accidental ſcarcity, in any ſingle province, 'was immediately relieved by the plenty of its more for-'tunate neighbours[41].' It may be added, that, antecedently to the acceſſion of Conſtantine, the dominions of Rome had not been regularly divided into the empires of the Eaſt and the Weſt. Conſequently the huſbandman and the farmer were not weighed down by ſo intolerable a preſſure of taxes: and, *as but one court exiſted*, that hoſt of idlers and prodigals, who conſtitute or ſurround a court, were far leſs numerous: and thoſe who were drawn aſide from the plough, the forge, and the loom, to ſupply the luxuries, and to miniſter to the amuſements, of the prince and his dependents, occupied a narrower ſpace in the ranks of ſociety.

To evince that thoſe who inhabited the countries of the Roman empire were not afflicted by ſo ſevere a ſcarcity of corn and food, *ſubſequent* to the æra of the third ſeal, one deciſive fact may be alleged. In the 8th, the 9th, and the 10th centuries, they certainly amounted not to one half, and probably not to one third, of the number of thoſe, who lived when the mighty fabric of Roman greatneſs was unſhaken, and conſequently a much ſmaller

[40] Vol. I. p. 86. During the reign of Gallienus, it is true, an extreme ſcarcity of proviſions was felt throughout the Roman empire. But it was comparatively of ſhort continuance; and the indolent Gallienus was ſucceeded by a ſeries of great princes, under whom order prevailed, and agriculture flouriſhed.

[41] 'In an extenſive corn-country, between all the different parts of 'which there is a free commerce and communication, the ſcarcity occa-'ſioned by the moſt unfavourable ſeaſons can *never* be ſo great as to pro-'duce a famine.' Smith's Wealth of Nations, 7th ed. vol. II. p. 295.

quantity

quantity of proviſions was ſufficient for their ſubſiſtence. And there are obvious reaſons, why, for a number of paſt centuries, no general and permanent ſcarcity of proviſions has been felt. The eſtabliſhment of laws, and the ſtability of governments, have given protection to property, and confidence to induſtry. Nations have been far leſs expoſed to the ravages of foreign conqueſt; and, during the proſecution of war, its horrors have been alleviated by the ſuperior mildneſs of modern times. Vaſt woods have been felled, and immenſe tracks of waſte land cultivated. Agriculture has received a long ſucceſſion of improvements; and commerce has opened a way for the interchange of its produce between the moſt diſtant countries of the globe.

The account of the two next ſeals, as well as that of the two firſt, is taken from Vitringa. *The fourth ſeal* predicts the conqueſts and devaſtations of the Saracens and the Turks[42], by whoſe inſtrumentality Divine Providence ſeverely puniſhed the corrupt morals and abject ſuperſtitions of the degenerate Chriſtians of that time, and particularly thoſe of the Eaſt[43]; and by whoſe progreſs the Deity permitted, not only that a large portion of the globe ſhould be involved in wretchedneſs, and be in a great degree depopulated; but that it ſhould alſo ceaſe to profeſs the belief, and to enjoy the benefits, of Chriſtianity[44], though it had been long planted there and firmly eſtabliſhed.

[42] I know not, that this opinion has been adopted by a ſingle Engliſh commentator. It is, however, common on the continent. 'Sigillum 'Quartum,' ſays Wolfius (*Curæ Philologicæ*, in loc.), 'de Saracenis et Turcis 'MULTI accipiunt.'

[43] Superſtitious as was the worſhip which prevailed in the Weſt, that of the Eaſtern Chriſtians was, ſays Vitringa, at this time far more corrupt. In Apoc. p. 418.

[44] Not only was Chriſtianity once eſtabliſhed in Macedonia and Greece, in Syria, Armenia, and Aſia Minor, in Lybia, Egypt and Abyſſinia; but it

eſtabliſhed. Thoſe barbarous perſecutions, which have been kindled by the antichriſtian church, *the fifth ſeal* repreſents: it plainly announces that thoſe who ſhould ſtand forward in defence of Evangelic truth ſhould be expoſed to them for a very long duration of time; and, including the Albigenſes and Waldenſes, the Bohemian Brethren and French Proteſtants, as well as a crowd of contemporary ſufferers that might be enumerated, it comprehends the far greater number of thoſe who have ever periſhed in the cauſe of religion. It embraces the period which runs from the 13th century to the fall of the antichriſtian empire. As this great cataſtrophe is yet future, we appear to be now living under the fifth ſeal, though near the cloſe of it, and when the fury of religious zeal has almoſt ſpent its force.

The next of theſe prophecies, which is to be a more particular object of enquiry, is thus ſublimely expreſſed: *and I beheld when he had opened the ſixth ſeal, and lo, there was a great Earthquake; and the ſun became black as ſackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the ſtars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree caſteth her untimely figs when ſhe is ſhaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a ſcrowl when it is rolled together; and every mountain and iſland were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth,*

it had at one time made a conſiderable progreſs in the iſlands of Socotra and Ceylon, in Iberia and Thrace, in Arabia and Perſia, in Tartary, China, and Hindoſtan. But at preſent, among the natives of all theſe countries, the knowledge of Chriſtianity is either completely obliterated, or it is obſcurely profeſſed by a ſcanty portion of illiterate believers. The religion of Mahomet, on the contrary, in almoſt every one of theſe countries, either bears an undiſputed ſway, or has acquired very numerous proſelytes. See Moſheim's *Eccl. Hiſt.* (vol. I. p. 199, 274, 275; vol. II. p. 2, 43, 179), and *the Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp.* (vol. VIII. p. 339—347). Early in the 5th century, there were, ſays Sir I. Newton, in Africa alone about 700 biſhoprics. *Obſ. on Dan.* p. 298.

*and*

*and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themſelves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and ſaid to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day*[45] *of his wrath is come; and who ſhall be able to ſtand*[46]*?*

The expreſſions of this ſeal, ſays Dr. Wall, 'are always the emblems of kings, emperors, governments, 'falling.' Not only does a part of this ſtriking paſſage bear, on the very face of it, a ſtrong reſemblance to the prediction of Jeſus; but it may be regarded as repreſenting the very ſame events in a more expanded form. What is ſaid here, *that there was a Great Earthquake*, ſignifies, ſays Vitringa, 'that there would be a mighty Revo-'lution, which would happen in ſome great empire, or 'rather in the world, or ſome eminent part of it, which 'is treated of in this prophecy.' Now this part of the world, he obſerves, is Europe. 'Under the emblem of '*the heaven being rolled together* is ſignified a thorough 'change or abolition of the whole ſyſtem both political and 'eccleſiaſtical.—For in the prophetic ſtyle, as I juſt now 'obſerved, the whole body of thoſe who have rule and 'authority, both civil and eccleſiaſtical, are included un-'der the name of *heaven*.' And, in another place, Vitringa ſays, this ſeal foretells, 'that Great Commotions 'would ſuddenly ariſe, both in the empire of Papal 'Rome, and in the other kingdoms and republics of Eu-'rope, God being about to raiſe up by his providence 'avengers, who would undertake the cauſe of the af-'flicted.' Nothing, ſays this judicious commentator, *can*

[45] On the expreſſion, *the Great Day of God*, ſee the obſervations from Lowth, Daubuz, and Mede, in p. 294.

[46] VI. 12—17.

*be*

*be more evident* than this explication of the ſixth ſeal, if we have compared it with the ſeventh vial, which, in almoſt the ſame words, foretells the deſtruction of the antichriſtian empire.

The ſixth ſeal has, however, been applied by bp. Newton and by various other commentators to the ſucceſſive defeats of Maxentius and Licinius, to the deſtruction of the pagan temples, and to the various alterations accompliſhed by Conſtantine[47]. But, beſides obſerving, that, according to the ideas I entertain of the former ſeals, theſe events belong to a period far remote from that of the ſixth ſeal, and therefore that this interpretation cannot poſſibly be the true one; I appeal to the good ſenſe of the unprejudiced reader, whether theſe occurrences, though of acknowledged importance, are adequate to the grandeur or to the import of the prophetic images. 'In 'divine writings,' ſays Dr. Apthorp, 'this rule is indiſ-'penſable, that a profuſion of the higher figures be not 'employed on a diſproportioned ſubject, or to impreſs 'ideas too vaſt for the event[48].' Beſides is it not ſaid, that *the kings of the earth—hid themſelves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains*; and is it not admitted without diſpute, in other places, that *the kings of the earth* are the modern monarchs of the European world? Whence then is it applied to a period of time, when theſe kings had no exiſtence? That the period referred to ſhould not be paſſed over in ſilence, Vitringa thinks it reaſonable to expect; and he accordingly is of opinion, that 'the times of Conſtantine are painted in vivid co-'lours through the greateſt part of the xiith chapter[49].'

[47] Should any perſon, notwithſtanding all the force of the objections againſt it, apprehend, that the ſixth ſeal has an aſpect to theſe inferior and leſs important events, yet he will probably acquieſce in an obſervation of Mr. Waple, that it 'has *alſo* a relation to the final judgments upon Anti-'chriſt.'

[48] Vol. I. p. 86. [49] P. 239.

An

An interpreter of the apocalypſe 'muſt,' ſays Daubuz, 'enlarge his thoughts, and embrace at once the whole 'extent and duration of the Chriſtian religion or 'church.' It is evident that the whole church is concerned in the events deſcribed, 'ſo that when large and 'noble events or revolutions fit the ſymbols exactly, it 'is unworthy of the Holy Ghoſt, to think they are ap-'plicable' to ſuch as are leſs conſiderable and leſs important[50].

That the ſymbols of the ſixth ſeal are of too auguſt a kind to be applied to the occurrences which happened in the time of Conſtantine, is a circumſtance on which Vitringa has not omitted to lay proper ſtreſs. But this is not all. The civil government was NOT overturned. It is true, ſays Vitringa, that ſome emperors were diveſted of their power. But 'in this there was nothing 'new or ſingular.' The ſame rank and the ſame title, which Conſtantine had wreſted from his rivals, he himſelf continued to retain. 'The imagery of the ſixth ſeal 'exhibits to us the change and ſubverſion of the ſtate of 'ſome empire, which ſhould be accompliſhed with a 'ſudden ſhaking and the moſt violent commotion.' But the alterations introduced by Conſtantine were, ſays this learned divine, executed in *a period of profound peace*; and there was nothing in them that correſponded to the figures of the prophet. In the ſubverſion of paganiſm, the Chriſtian emperor did, ſays Vitringa, proceed with moderation and with caution. Many of its temples and its ſhrines continued untouched; the art of divination was ſtill publicly practiſed[51]; their eſtates, their SALARIES,

[50] Preliminary Diſcourſe, p. 42.

[51] 'There is a law of Conſtantine, which ſhews that himſelf was not 'altogether free from pagan ſuperſtition, in which he *orders* the *haruſpices* 'to be conſulted, if any public edifice was ſtruck with lightning.—We 'may

RIES, their PRIVILEGES ſtill remained in the hands of the veſtals and the prieſts and the hierophants; in the greater cities, and eſpecially at Rome, where an altar ſtood to the honour of the Goddeſs Victory, public ſacrifices were permitted; and a large proportion of the Roman ſenate, many years after the time of Conſtantine, continued in the belief, and perſevered in the patronage, of the heathen ſuperſtitions. 'Do theſe, and other 'things which I omit, anſwer to the imagery of the ſixth 'ſeal? Whilſt men, addicted to the idolatry of pa-'ganiſm, were every where promoted to the higheſt dig-'nities of the ſtate, at a time when Chriſtian emperors 'held the reins of government; had they any neceſſity 'to ſay *to the mountains and to the rocks, fall on us, and 'hide us from the wrath of the Lamb?* Was paganiſm 'ſubverted with violence and a mighty commotion, 'when, long after the time of Conſtantine, it ſubſiſted 'and flouriſhed in the principal cities of the empire[52]?'

Of

'may add to this, that a temple of the Goddeſs Concord, being decayed by 'length of time, was repaired or rebuilt by Conſtantine, if we may truſt to 'an inſcription in Lilius Giraldus.' Jortin on E. H. vol. II. p. 305.

[52] P. 235. There is an original epiſtle remaining, 'which Conſtantine 'addreſſed to the followers of the ancient religion; at a time when he no 'longer diſguiſed his converſion, nor dreaded the rivals of his throne. He 'invites and exhorts, in the moſt preſſing terms, the ſubjects of the Roman 'empire to imitate the example of their maſter; but he declares, that thoſe 'who ſtill refuſe to open their eyes to the celeſtial light may freely enjoy 'their temples, and their fancied Gods. A report, that the ceremonies of 'paganiſm was ſuppreſſed, is formally contradicted by the emperor him-'ſelf, who wiſely aſſigns, as the principle of his moderation, the invin-'cible force of habit, of prejudice, and of ſuperſtition.—The evidence 'of facts, and the monuments which are ſtill extant of braſs and marble, 'continue to prove the public exerciſe of the pagan worſhip *during the 'whole reign of the ſons of Conſtantine.* In the Eaſt, as well as in the Weſt, 'in cities, as well as in the country, a great number of temples were reſ-'pected, or at leaſt were ſpared; and the devout multitude ſtill enjoyed 'the luxury of ſacrifices, of feſtivals, and of proceſſions.—The title, the

'enſigns

Of a part of the ſymbols of the ſixth ſeal, and it will only be neceſſary with reſpect to a part, I ſhall give a detailed account. *There was a great earthquake*, i. e. a mighty revolution; *and the ſun became black as ſackcloth of hair*, the antichriſtian monarchies of the European world were completely darkened; *the moon became as blood*, the power of thoſe who ſtood in the next rank to royalty was obliterated; *and the ſtars of heaven fell unto the earth*[53], the nobility were brought down to a level with the maſs of mankind, and ſtripped of all their excluſive privileges. *The heaven departed as a ſcrowl, when it is rolled together*, the old governments, which had been ſo conſpicuous and extenſive[54], diſappeared; *and every mountain*, i. e. government[55], *and iſland*, i. e. European country, *were moved out of their places*. They were not merely ſhaken with the greatneſs of the changes, but were placed in a ſituation altogether different from that which they had previouſly occupied. That 'the prophetic writers called *the European coun-'tries*, to which the Jews traded by *ſea*, by the name 'of *iſles* and *iſlands of the ſea*[56],' Mr. Pyle obſerves, at the ſame

'enſigns, the prerogatives of Sovereign Pontiff, which had been inſtituted 'by Numa, and aſſumed by Auguſtus, were accepted, without heſitation, '*by ſeven Chriſtian emperors*.—Gratian was the firſt who refuſed the pon-'tifical robe;' and 'the fourth diſſertation of M. de la Baſtie, *ſur le Souve-'rain Pontificat des Empereurs Romains*,' which 'is a very learned and ju-'dicious performance,—proves the toleration of paganiſm from Conſtan-'tine to Gratian.' Decl. and Fall of the R. E. vol. III. p. 405, 408, 409.

[53] On the word *earth* look back to p. 88 and 388.

[54] Like the books of the ancients, which, when ſpread out, were capable of covering a large ſpace.

[55] That '*a mountain* is the ſymbol of a kingdom,' is the ſtatement of Dr. Lancaſter; that it may ſignify any ſpecies of government, he likewiſe obſerves; and it is the remark of Vitringa upon this verſe, that not only the Monarchies, but what are called Republics and Free States, would, in this general Revolution, undergo the greateſt changes.

[56] See the ſame obſervation in Sir I. Newton (*on Dan.* p. 277), and in Dr.

ſame time remarking, that 'as earthquakes are ſeen to 'ſwallow up whole *iſlands* in the ſea, and to overturn 'mountains, ſo will the ſeveral ſtates and great kingdoms 'of this Weſtern world be all quite changed in their 'religion, and the powers of Antichriſt be ſwallowed 'up[57].'

Agreeably to the practice of the prophets, St. John, in the next verſe, repreſents that literally, which he had before expreſſed under the cover of ſymbols. He foretells, that the princes and the great men of the earth, together with all their partiſans, will, from the violence of their fears, *hide themſelves in the dens and in the rocks*, i. e. ſays Mr. Waple, in 'the moſt ſecret and in-'acceſſible places.' 'The reſt of the prophecy being 'to proceed with the like metaphors, of plagues upon '*the ſun, moon, ſtars, earth, trees*, &c.' the prophet, ſays Dr. Goodwin, 'here gives one literal explanation 'of them in this, which is his firſt mention of ſuch, 'which one may ſerve for all; that ſo by the analogy 'of the Holy Ghoſt's own expoſition here, the reſt 'might be interpreted: who makes kings to be as *the* '*ſun*, and nobles as *the ſtars*[58].'

With reſpect to the ſixth ſeal, I ſhall only add, that the interpretation of it, which Vitringa has ſo largely defended, and demonſtrated as I conceive with great ſtrength of evidence, is no novel explication, but on the contrary of the higheſt antiquity. That it predicted the great events which were to happen at the deſtruction of Antichriſt, was the opinion of Victorinus, of Andrew,

Dr. Lancaſter. To account for this uſe of the word *iſlands* another reaſon may alſo be aſſigned. 'Iſlands,' ſays Mr. Lowth (on Iſa. xi. 11), 'in the 'prophetic ſtyle, ſeem particularly to denote the *Weſtern* parts of the 'world, or the European nations: the *Weſt* being often called the *ſea* in 'the ſcripture language.'

[57] On Rev. xvi. 20. [58] In loc. p. 43.

and

and of Arethas, whoſe commentaries on the Revelation are ſtill extant. The firſt of theſe filled the epiſcopal ſee of Pettaw in Auſtria, and ſuffered martyrdom under Diocleſian; the ſecond, about the cloſe of the fifth century, was biſhop of Cæſarea in Cappadocia; and the laſt is ſuppoſed to have been biſhop of the ſame ſee in the ſucceeding century[59].

The arguments, alleged in the preſent work to prove that the antichriſtian monarchies of Europe will be demoliſhed, are deduced from prophecy. Thoſe who are deſirous of ſeeing the powerful arguments that lead to the ſame concluſion, which are drawn from a quarter altogether different, I mean, from the deductions of reaſon, from the nature of things, and from the exiſting ſtate of the European world, ſhould peruſe the able pamphlet of M. Mallet du Pan, entitled *the Dangers which menace Europe*[60]. In the apprehenſion of this celebrated abbe, the overthrow of the deſpotic monarchies which he ſo much dreads, would be one of the moſt fatal of all poſſible events; an event, as he affects to believe, ſubverſive of religion, and happineſs, and ſocial order. But, I am convinced, that far different would be its effects. I am convinced, that it would accelerate the general practice, as well as the univerſal diffuſion of Chriſtianity; and would cauſe mankind to attain to ſuch a pitch of proſperity and of improvement, as the world has never ſeen, and can but faintly conceive.

[59] On the age and authority of theſe early commentators, ſee Lardner.

[60] Dr. Hartley, independently of any reference to prophecy, long ago ſtated ſome of the more important cauſes, which threaten diſſolution to the preſent European governments. *On Man*, vol. II. p. 449—454.

# CHAPTER XXIV.

## ON SOME PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, PRINCIPALLY IN ISAIAH, FORETELLING GREAT CHANGES IN HUMAN AFFAIRS.

AT the entrance of the laſt chapter it was obſerved, that in Iſaiah a paſſage occurs parallel to the memorable prophecy of our Lord; and it ſhall be my preſent object to prepare the reader for giving a favourable reception to the interpretation of it which I have embraced.

'It is,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'uſual with the prophets, 'when they foretell ſome extraordinary event in, or 'near their own times, to carry their views on farther, 'and point at ſome greater deliverance, which God ſhall 'vouchſafe to his people in the latter ages of the 'world[1].' There are 'innumerable inſtances,' ſays bp. Hurd, in the Jewiſh prophets, wherein their predictions have a double accompliſhment; and accordingly we find, 'that the writers of the New Teſtament give to 'many of the old prophecies an interpretation, very dif-'ferent and remote from that which may be reaſonably 'thought the primary and immediate view of the pro-'phets themſelves[2].' And the more diſtant events which they prefigure are generally far the moſt important; 'the

[1] On Iſa. x. 20.

[2] Vol. I. p. 61, 127. The double ſenſe of prophecy, ſays bp. Lowth, 'the ſacred writers of the New Teſtament clearly ſuppoſe, and according 'to' it 'they frequently frame their interpretation of paſſages of the Old 'Teſtament.' On Iſa. xi. 1.

'ſtyle

'ſtyle of the prophet ſo adapting itſelf to this double 'proſpect, as to paint the near and ſubordinate event in 'terms, that emphatically repreſent the diſtant and more 'conſiderable[3].'

The following inſtance of an expreſſion of a double import is given by Warburton. 'On Peter's refuſing 'to eat of clean and unclean meats promiſcuouſly, in 'the viſion preſented to him, the Holy Spirit ſays, *What 'God hath cleanſed that call not thou common*[4]. The 'ſingle propoſition is, that which God hath cleanſed is 'not common or impure; but no one who reads this 'ſtory can doubt of its having this double ſenſe: 1. *That 'the diſtinction between clean and unclean meats was to be 'aboliſhed.* 2. And *that the Gentiles were to be called 'into the church of Chriſt.* Here, then, the true ſenſe 'of theſe paſſages is not *one*, but *two*: and yet the inten-'tion or meaning is not, on this account, the leaſt ob-'ſcured or loſt, or rendered doubtful or unintelligible[5].'

That there are various prophecies of a double ſenſe is very generally admitted, and by theologues of the correcteſt judgment, as by Limborch and Grotius, by Ludovicus Capellus and Campegius Vitringa, by Dr. Jortin and Dr. Samuel Clarke. So ſtrong are the reaſons for concluding, that ſome predictions are of this deſcription, that *extremely few* are the writers, minutely converſant in the prophetic ſcriptures, who have denied their exiſtence.

'Since from the expreſs prophecies before cited of 'the Meſſiah's everlaſting kingdom of righteouſneſs, it 'appears,' ſays Dr. Clarke, 'that God had *in fact* a 'view to that, as the *great and general end* of all the 'diſpenſations of providence towards his true worſhip-

[3] Vol. I. p. 65, 68.
[4] Acts x. 15.
[5] Div. Leg. of Moſes, 1765, vol. V. p. 314.

'pers from the beginning; and *no prophecy of the ſcrip-*
'*ture is of any private interpretation*[6], (that is, the
'meaning of the prophecies is not what perhaps the
'prophet himſelf might imagine in his private judgment
'of the ſtate of things then preſent,)—*but holy men ſpake*
'*as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt:* there may,
'therefore, very poſſibly and very reaſonably be ſup-
'poſed to be many prophecies, which, though they may
'have a prior and immediate reference to ſome *nearer*
'*event*, yet by the Spirit of God (whom thoſe prophecies
'that are expreſs ſhow to have had a *farther* view,)
'may have been directed to be uttered in ſuch words, as
'may even more properly and more juſtly be applied to
'the *great event* which Providence had in view, than to
'the *intermediate event* which God deſigned as only a
'pledge or earneſt of the other[7].' In agreement with
this bp. Hurd ſays, 'it does not appear, that the later
'prophets always underſtood the drift of the more
'ancient; or, that either of them clearly apprehended
'the whole ſcope and purpoſe of their own pre-
'dictions[8].'

In order to prove the exiſtence of a double ſenſe in
prophecy, Mr. Lowth ſays, 'there are ſeveral prophe-
'cies, in which ſome of the moſt remarkable paſſages
'were never fulfilled in the perſons of thoſe, concerning
'whom they were firſt ſpoken: as thoſe paſſages in
'David's Pſalms, *they pierced my hands and my feet,*
'*they parted my garments, and caſt lots upon my veſ-*
'*ture*[9]; *they gave me gall to eat, and vinegar to*

[6] 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

[7] Evi. of Nat. and Rev. Rel. p. 409.

[8] Vol. I. p. 135.

[9] By St. Matthew this is referred to as a prediction of Chriſt (xxvii. 35).

'*drink*;

'*drink*[10]; were never, that we can find, literally true of 'David, though it is likely both thoſe pſalms were at 'firſt penned by him with regard to his own circum-'ſtances. In ſhort, let any man compare the literal 'ſenſe of the prophecies relating to Chriſt, as it is ex-'plained by Grotius, (who has took more pains to clear 'this matter than any other expoſitor) with the' ſecond-ary and more important ſenſe, 'and he will find, that 'generally ſpeaking the primary or literal ſenſe does not 'come up to the full import and meaning of the words: 'but looks narrow and forced in many places, in com-'pariſon of the' other[11]. 'David,' ſays Dr. Jortin, 'ſeems to ſpeak concerning himſelf when he ſays, *thou 'ſhalt not leave my ſoul in hell*[12], *nor ſuffer thy holy one 'to ſee corruption*[13]. He intended perhaps no more 'than this, thou ſhalt not ſuffer me to come to an un-'timely end, to be killed by mine enemies and caſt into 'the grave: but then the divine impulſe, which was 'upon him, made him uſe words which ſhould ſuit 'exactly to Chriſt, and to himſelf only in a looſe and 'figurative ſenſe. Of this the prophet himſelf *might* be 'ſenſible, and might know that his words had another 'import, and that they ſhould be fulfilled twice, both in 'the ſenſe which he intended, and in the ſublimer ſenſe 'of the holy ſpirit. By theſe means a ſhade was caſt 'over the prophecy, and the ſenſe of the Spirit was 'concealed till the event unfolded it and made it con-

[10] Pſ. xxii. 16, 18; lxix. 21.

[11] Vindic. of the Div. Auth. and Inſp. of the Old and New Teſt. p. 153.

[12] That is, *thou wilt not leave my life in the grave.* That this is the true and literal ſignification of the words, Dr. Whitby has proved at length (on the Acts, ii. 27).

[13] Pſ. xvi. 10.

'ſpicuous[14].' Theſe words of David, the apoſtles, Peter and Paul, ſpeak of in ſuch terms, as if they concluded them to be an undoubted prediction of Chriſt's reſurrection from the dead[15]; and certainly the Chriſtian, who is perſuaded that there are predictions, relative to the holy founder of our religion, interſperſed in the pages of the Jewiſh prophets, cannot but think, that this was a circumſtance eminently worthy of being foretold.

One reaſon, ſays Mr. Lowth, why the prophecies ſhould have a ſecondary ſenſe, as well as a primary and literal one, may 'be taken from the nature and uſe of 'prophecy in general, which makes it requiſite, that 'prophecies ſhould be delivered with ſome degree of 'obſcurity.—I deny not but there are ſome plain pro-'phecies in ſcripture, but as much the greater part of 'them have ſomething of obſcurity, ſo I doubt not but 'to make it appear, that the obſcurity of the prophecies 'is ſo far from being an objection againſt them, as ſome 'pretend, that on the contrary it is abſolutely requiſite, 'that moſt prophecies ſhould be obſcure, or elſe they 'would not anſwer the deſigns for which they were 'given, nor be accompliſhed in a way agreeable to the 'methods of providence[16].'

Without allowing a double ſenſe in prophecy, 'we 'ſhall,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'make great confuſion and 'diſorder in the prophetical writings, if we ſuppoſe 'them to break off abruptly from the matter in hand, and 'without any viſible tranſition go to a quite different 'ſubject. And this is, to ſpeak more particularly, very 'unreaſonable to ſuppoſe in the prophet Iſaiah, who as 'he is moſt eminent for the clearneſs of his prophecies 'concerning the Meſſiah, ſo he is as remarkable for the

[14] Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. I. p. 129,
[15] Acts ii. 27; xiii. 36. [16] Vindic. &c. p. 162.

'regular

'regular order and contexture of his prophecies, and 'their coherence one with another. And the hiſtorical 'relations, which he interſperſes in his writings, ſerve 'as a key to open the primary and literal intention of 'his whole prophecy. But the beauty of it taken all 'together will be quite ſpoiled, except we ſuppoſe him 'in moſt caſes to have ſome regard to the ſubject he is 'upon, and rather to take hints from thence to diſcourſe 'concerning the ſtate of the goſpel, than to fly out into 'a foreign ſubject without any reſpect to order or 'coherence[17].'

That the doctrine of the double ſenſe of prophecy has frequently been recurred to for the explication of predictions, where no ſecondary ſignification is to be found, cannot be doubted. Hence ſome have been ready to conclude, becauſe it has been falſely aſcribed to ſome prophecies, that it therefore belongs to none. But certainly, whether the doctrine be or be not well-founded, the arguments drawn from the abuſe of it conſtitute no very logical proof of its non-exiſtence. From the ſame cauſe, however, both prophecy and Chriſtianity have, in the eyes of ſome, fallen into diſrepute; and the reality of the one has been queſtioned, and the truth of the other has been controverted[18].

My

[17] P. 147.

[18] After the paragraph above in the text was written, I met with the following paſſage in Warburton. If, ſays the prelate, it be aſked, what it is which hath prejudiced ſome perſons againſt typical and ſecondary ſenſes? 'I anſwer, the folly of fanatics, who have abuſed it in ſupport 'of the moſt abominable nonſenſe. But how unreaſonable is this preju-'dice! Was there ever any thing rational or excellent amongſt men, that 'hath not been thus abuſed? Is it any diſparagement to the method of 'geometers, that ſome conceited writers on morality and religion have of 'late taken it up, to give an air of weight and demonſtration to the whim-'ſies of pedantic importance? Is there no truth of nature, or reaſonable-

My next citations I ſhall introduce with the leſs ſcruple, becauſe they proceed from the pen of a writer, whoſe diſcourſes on prophecy, on account of the importance of the matter, and the elegance of the ſtyle, will long continue to be peruſed with pleaſure.

When the Jews 'were ſelected from the other nations, to anſwer many wiſe ends of providence, it 'pleaſed God,' ſays bp. Hurd, 'to inſtitute a form of 'government for them, which could not ſubſiſt without 'his frequent interpoſition; manifeſted in ſuch a way as 'might convince them, that they were under the actual 'and immediate conduct of their divine ſovereign. 'Hence it became a part of this ſingular œconomy, to 'be adminiſtered in the way of prophecy; by which it 'would be ſeen, that the hand of God was upon them in 'all their more important concerns. Upon this baſis of 'an extraordinary providence the Jewiſh government 'ſtood; and we are now to ſee in what manner the 'prophetic ſpirit, ſo eſſential to that polity, was employed.'

'*Firſt*, we may obſerve, that, by means of this proviſion for their civil regimen, an apt and commodious 'way was opened for carrying on the divine councils in 'regard to Jeſus; in whom, indeed, the Law itſelf was to 'be fulfilled.—The general theme of the *prophet* was 'ſome temporal ſucceſs or calamity of the Jewiſh ſtate; 'the ſecret purpoſe of the *inſpirer* was, occaſionally at

'neſs of art, in grammatical conſtruction, becauſe cabaliſtic dunces have in 'every age abuſed it to pervert all human meaning? We might as well 'ſay, that the ancient Egyptians did not write in hieroglyphics, becauſe 'Kircher, who endeavoured to explain them, hath given us nothing but 'his own viſions, as that the ancient Jews had not types and ſecondary 'ſenſes, becauſe modern enthuſiaſts have allegorized their whole ſtory.' Div. Leg. of Moſes, 1765, vol. V. p. 353.

'leaſt,

'leaſt, and when he ſaw fit, to predict the ſpiritual king-
'dom of the Meſſiah[19].'

*Secondly*, to excite attention to theſe remoter prophecies, 'care was taken to ſecure the authority of the pro-
'phet by the completion of his civil predictions in
'events diſtinctly deſcribed, and near at hand. Thus,
'Moſes might be believed by the Jews in what he ſaid,
'of *a prophet to be raiſed up*, in a future age, *like to*
'*himſelf*[20]; when they ſaw his prophetic bleſſings and
'curſes upon them, according to their deſerts in the
'land of Canaan, ſo ſpeedily and ſo punctually ex-
'ecuted. Thus, too, their prophet, Iſaiah, might rea-
'ſonably expect to find credit with them for the glo-
'rious things predicted by him of the great deliverer,
'the Meſſiah; when their deliverance from the Baby-
'loniſh captivity was ſeen ſo certainly to verify his pre-
'diction of that event. The prophet himſelf exults in
'this argument, as deciſive and unanſwerable. *Behold*,
'ſays he, *the former things are come to paſs*, i. e. the
'prophecies, I have delivered to you concerning your
'redemption from the Aſſyrian bondage, will ſoon be ſo
'exactly completed, that I regard them as things *paſt*;
'*and therefore new things do I declare*; hence I claim
'your belief of other prophecies, concerning a much
'greater redemption, to take place hereafter, though
'there be no appearance, as yet, of any cauſes tending
'to produce it; *for before they ſpring forth, I tell you*
'*of them*[21].'

*Thirdly*, 'with theſe *new things*, theſe ſpiritual pro-
'phecies concerning the firſt coming of the Meſſiah,
'were likewiſe intermixed other prophecies, which ran

[19] 'This uſe and intent of prophecy was ſeen, and admirably expreſſed,
'by the great M. Paſchal. *Penſees*, p. 112.'

[20] Deut. xviii. 15. [21] Iſ. xlii. 9.

'out

'out beyond that term, and prefigured THE GREAT 'EVENTS OF HIS SECOND COMING: and the war- 'rant for admitting *theſe* would be the completion of 'thoſe other prophecies in the perſon and ſufferings of 'Chriſt. That there are ſuch prophecies in the Old 'Teſtament, will be ſhewn hereafter. In the mean time, 'it will not be thought incredible, that, if Jeſus be 'indeed the end of the prophetic ſcheme, the revolu- 'tions of his government ſhould be foretold, as well as 'the circumſtances of his perſonal appearance: in other 'words, that the conſummation of that deſign, which 'providence was carrying on, would not be overlooked, 'when the ſteps and gradations of it were ſo diſtinctly 'noted. For, in any reaſonable deſign whatſoever, the '*end* is firſt and principally in view, though the *means* 'engage, and may ſeem to engroſs, the attention of its 'author[22].'

Prophecies of a double ſenſe may, ſays Jortin, 'have 'meanings as determinate and fixed, as if they had only 'one ſenſe. The ſame is true of allegorical writings.' As an exemplification of this, the 14th of the Iſt book of Horace's odes may be ſpecified. This 'ode has a double 'ſenſe. The poet addreſſes himſelf to a real ſhip, and 'yet intended, under that image or emblem, to diſſuade 'the Romans from expoſing themſelves again to a civil

[22] Vol. I. p. 126, 131, 133. To the ſame purpoſe bp. Hurd elſe- where ſpeaks. Having laid it down as a fundamental principle, a prin- ciple, which is eſpecially grounded on Rev. xix. 10, 'that prophecy in 'general (that is, all the prophecies of the Old and New Teſtament) hath 'its ultimate accompliſhment in the hiſtory and diſpenſation of Jeſus;' the bp. of Worceſter aſks, 'and where is the wonder, that, if prophecy 'was given to atteſt the coming of Jeſus, and the diſpenſation to be erected 'by him, it ſhould occaſionally in every ſtage of it reſpect its main pur- 'poſe; and, though the immediate object be ſome other, it ſhould never 'loſe ſight of that, in which it was ultimately to find its repoſe and end?' Vol. I. p. 41, 62.

'war.'

'war[23].' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks bp. Warburton. 'Horace,' ſays the prelate, 'thus addreſſes a crazy ſhip 'in which his friends embarked for the Ægean ſea:

'O navis, referent in mare te novi
'Fluctus! O quid agis? Fortiter occupa
'Portum: nonne vides ut
'Nudum remigio latus, &c.

'In the firſt and *primary* ſenſe he deſcribes the dangers 'of his friends in a weak unmanned veſſel, and in a 'tempeſtuous ſea: in the *ſecondary*, the dangers of the 'republic in entering into a new civil war, after all the 'loſſes and diſaſters of the old. As to the ſecondary 'ſenſe,—we have the teſtimony of early antiquity deliv-'ered by Quintilian: as to the primary ſenſe, the fol-'lowing will not ſuffer us to doubt of it.

'Nuper ſolicitum quæ mihi tædium,
'Nunc deſiderium, curaque non levis,
'Interfuſa nitentes
'Vites æquora Cycladas.'

Had the ode 'been purely hiſtorical, nothing had been 'more cold or trifling; had it been purely allegorical, 'nothing leſs natural or gracious, on account of the 'enormous length into which it is drawn.—But ſuppoſe 'the ode to be both hiſtorical and allegorical, and that, 'under his immediate concern for his friends, he con-'veyed his more diſtant apprehenſions for the republic, 'and then there appears ſo much eaſe, and art, and 'dignity in every period, as to make us juſtly eſteem 'it the moſt finiſhed compoſition of antiquity[24].'

But though there are predictions which have a double aſpect, the advocates of that opinion need not heſitate to admit, with Dr. Jortin, that the direct prophecies,

[23] Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. I. p. 128.
[24] Div. Leg. of Moſes, 1765, vol. V. p. 316.

which

which are taken only in one ſenſe, are thoſe, on which 'we ought principally to inſiſt, when we would prove 'the truth of our religion from the predictions of the 'Old Teſtament[25].'

To interpret many of the predictions in the Hebrew prophets, as having an expreſs and ultimate reference to the fortunes of Chriſt's kingdom, is the method which Vitringa decidedly approves, and every where illuſtrates. 'This,' ſays he, 'was the mode of interpretation follow-'ed by the ancients; by thoſe who, after the ancient 'models, commented on the ſcriptures in the middle 'ages; and by the moſt eminent leaders of the Refor-'mation, Luther, Brentius, Pellicanus, Bibliander, Bu-'genhagius, Snoius; and, in the laſt age, by Cocceius 'and Altingius[26].' And I know not, whether any ſcholar will be juſtified in totally diſclaiming the double ſenſe in prophecy, until he has peruſed ſome of the many obſervations on this ſubject, which are ſcattered over the works of Vitringa[27].

Of this nature is thought to be the xiiith chapter of Iſaiah, which, all the commentators agree, did, in its primary ſenſe, foretell the deſtruction of the Babylonian monarchy and ariſtocracy.

With reſpect to the *ſtyle* of Iſaiah, it 'has,' ſays Mr. Gray, 'been univerſally admired as the moſt perfect 'model of the ſublime; it is diſtinguiſhed for all the 'magnificence, and for all the ſweetneſs of the Hebrew

[25] Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. I. p. 121. On the double ſenſe of prophecy ſee alſo the xith of bp. Lowth's Lect. on Hebrew Poetry.

[26] Vitringa *de Canonibus Verbi Prophetici rectè exponendi*, cap. ii. can. xii.

[27] 'That the ancient prophets had a real eye to the corruptions and 'downfal of' the 'antichriſtian Babylon, &c. in their prophecies con-'cerning' the 'political cities and governments of old, the reader may,' ſays Mr. Pyle, 'be ſatisfied from that learned and laborious commentator 'Vitringa on Iſai. xxiii. *ad finem cap.* and in many other parts of that ex-'cellent work.' Pyle on the Rev. p. 155.

'language.

'language. The variety of his images, and the animated 'warmth of his expreſſions, characterize him as un-'equalled in point of eloquence; and if we were de-'ſirous of producing a ſpecimen of the dignity and 'beauties of the ſcripture-language, we ſhould imme-'diately think of having recourſe to Iſaiah[28].' With reſpect to the *period* in which he flouriſhed, we are informed in the iſt chapter and the 1ſt verſe of his writings, that he propheſied *in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.* Now Uzziah aſcended the throne of Judah in the year 761 before the Chriſtian æra[29]. 'The prophecies of Iſaiah,' ſays bp. Hurd, 'it is well known, are CHIEFLY taken 'up in predicting the future glories of Chriſt's king-'dom[30].'

Without adducing any farther preliminary obſervations, I proceed to the citation of the words, which gave riſe to them. *Behold, the day of the Lord cometh*[31], *cruel both with war and fierce anger, to lay the land*[32] '*deſolate:*

[28] Key to the Old Teſt. p. 369. Thoſe who feel a deſire of carefully examining the *beauties* of Iſaiah ſhould read, together with the maſterly commentary of Vitringa, the elegant Prælectiones of Lowth.

[29] Anc. Univ. Hiſt. vol. IV. p. 150.

[30] Serm. preached at Lincoln's Inn, vol. I. p. 276.

[31] 'As the prophets often ſpeak of things future, as if they were already 'effected; ſo they ſpeak often of things to be brought about in proceſs of 'time, as if they were to ſucceed immediately; paſt, preſent, and to come 'being all alike known to an infinite mind, and the intermediate time not 'revealed perhaps to the minds of the prophets.' Bp. Newton, vol. I. p. 293.

[32] Had the paſſage above been of ſo extenſive a ſignification as is repreſented, the word *land*, it may be objected, would not have been employed. The fact is, the word in the original might have been tranſlated the earth, as *the ſame word* in the Hebrew is tranſlated four verſes farther. Accordingly what is rendered *the land* in our verſion in the Septuagint is οἰκουμένην.

After

*deſolate: and he ſhall deſtroy the ſinners thereof out of it. For the ſtars of heaven and the conſtellations thereof ſhall not give their light: the ſun ſhall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon ſhall not cauſe her light to ſhine*[33]. *And I will puniſh the world for their evil*[34]; *and I will cauſe the arrogancy of the proud to ceaſe, and will lay low the haughtineſs of the terrible.—Therefore I will ſhake the heavens, and the earth ſhall move out of her place, in the day of the Lord of hoſts, and in the day of his fierce anger*[35].

Surely language like this appears to point at ſomewhat more than the victory of one arbitrary prince over a brother-monarch, and the removal of one ſet of rapacious nobles in order to make way for another. On the laſt of theſe verſes, Vitringa ſays, 'to no man, who is 'ſkilled in the diction of prophecy, is this figurative lan-'guage obſcure. It ſignifies, that the greateſt commo-'tions would ariſe in the world; and that, in the poli-'tical government of it, ſtupendous changes would be 'effected (together with the cleareſt demonſtration of

After writing the preceding note, I met with the following corroborative obſervation of Mr. Lowth in his notes on the xxivth ch. of Iſaiah. 'The Hebrew word *haärets* is promiſcuouſly rendered in this chapter by 'our interpreters either *earth* or *land*: and may be taken in a larger or 'narrower ſenſe, as the context inclines us to underſtand it.' It may be added, that the two firſt verſes of the firſt ch. of Geneſis, where haärets is uſed, prove beyond all contradiction, that this is a word of the moſt comprehenſive import. It is there ſaid, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void.*

[33] Maimonides ſpeaks of this and of v. 13, as having beyond all doubt a political and ſymbolic ſignification. *More Nevochim*, p. 265.

[34] In bp. Lowth's more correct Verſion it is: *I will viſit the world for its evil.* The Hebrew word, tranſlated *world*, is of the moſt extenſive import, and could not have been otherwiſe rendered. How this expreſſion can be excluſively applied to the empire of the king of Babylon, it does not ſeem eaſy to conceive.

[35] XIII. 9, 10, 11, 13.

'of

'of the Divine juſtice and ſeverity), not otherwiſe than 'if the heavens were to fall, and the earth were to move 'out of its place.'

This ſagacious commentator, ſpeaking of this part of Iſaiah, ſays, one object of this prophecy is to teach, 'that the fate of the figurative Babylon, and of all the 'kingdoms of the world, which ſhould oppoſe themſelves 'to the kingdom of the Son of God, would reſemble 'the fate of the real Babylon[36].' And he adds a little farther, that pious men may, from this prophecy, anticipate the deſtruction of the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom, and of all power which is hoſtile to it. One or two remarks, from the argument of Mr. Lowth on the xiiith ch. of Iſaiah, ſhall alſo be cited. 'After the 'deſcription of thoſe glorious times, which ſhould come 'to paſs in the latter days, the prophet foretells the de-'ſtruction of God's enemies, and begins with Babylon, 'whither God's people were to be carried captive, and 'therefore was a type or figure of Antichriſt, the great 'oppreſſor of God's church in after-times. See Rev. 'xvii. 5. And whoever carefully conſiders ſeveral par-'ticulars in this and the next chapter —will eaſily find, 'that theſe prophecies have an aſpect beyond the taking 'of Babylon by Cyrus, inaſmuch as the prophets de-'ſcribe this judgment as a deciſive ſtroke, that ſhould 'thoroughly vindicate the cauſe of oppreſſed truth and 'innocence.' But this cauſe cannot, I apprehend, be completely vindicated, till all the oppreſſive governments, not only of Europe, but of the world, ſhall be overthrown, and every remnant of ariſtocratic uſurpation ſhall be ſwept away; when thoſe, who glitter in their elevated ſtations in the political world, like the ſun, the moon, and the ſtars in the natural, ſhall be perfectly

[36] In Jeſai. vol. I. p. 377.

darkened,

darkened, and, in the expreſſive language of the prophet, *the arrogancy of the proud* ſhall *ceaſe, and the haughtineſs of the terrible* ſhall be *laid low.*

It is in the name of Almighty God, that the prophet ſays, *I will ſhake the heavens*, i. e. the governments of the world, *and the earth ſhall remove out of her place.* That *the earth* is a ſymbol of the great body of the people has before been remarked; and accordingly its *removal out of its place* appears here to ſignify, that they ſhall be raiſed from their preſent oppreſſed and degraded ſtate, and ſhall aſſume their proper rank in ſociety. Though contenting myſelf with the conciſeſt mention of this paſſage of Iſaiah, I yet cannot but entertain the expectation, that, after all which has been ſaid in this and the two preceding chapters, it will be thought, by many of my readers, pointedly to foretell the future accompliſhment of theſe happy events, and perfectly to harmonize with the memorable predictions of Daniel, of John, and of our Lord himſelf.

A parallel paſſage ſhall with brevity be referred to, for the explanation of which there is certainly no occaſion to have recurrence to that double ſenſe, which, as there is reaſon to think, is ſometimes found in prophecy. In the 2d and 4th verſes of the iid ch. of Iſaiah, that prophet ſays, *It ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days*[37], *that the mountain of the Lord's houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the mountains, and ſhall be exalted above the hills, and all nations ſhall flow unto it*; and *they ſhall beat their ſwords into plough-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning hooks*; a prediction manifeſtly deſcriptive, in its proper and primary ſenſe, of the millennium. 'Our writers,' ſays the learned Brenius, 'every where

[37] In the Improved Tranſlations of bp. Lowth and Mr. Dodſon it is, *in the latter days.*

'apply

'apply the expreſſion of *the laſt days* or *times* to the 'times of the Meſſiah, which run from that period, in 'which he obtained in heaven the kingdom even unto 'that time, in which he ſhall again deliver the kingdom 'to the Father. He ſays then *in the laſt days*, that is, in 'the time of the Meſſiah, *the mountain of the Lord's 'houſe*, that is, the kingdom of the people of God is 'about *to be exalted* upon all the kingdoms of the world. 'By Daniel the ſame is predicted under the image of *a 'ſtone, cut out of a mountain, and become a mountain*, 'which *fills the whole earth*.—But although this does 'not yet appear, as the monarchies of the world are ſtill 'ſtanding, which are firſt to be deſtroyed; yet when '*the times of the Gentiles* ſhall *be fulfilled*, and the full-'neſs of them ſhall have entered in, and the end of the 'monarchies exhibited to Daniel in his viſion ſhall be 'arrived, then at length this prophecy ſhall with all 'completeneſs be accompliſhed. *Mountain* we often 'ſee employed in the prophetic ſcriptures for *a kingdom* 'or *king*[38].'

After this ſtriking prediction of what is to take place at the commencement, and during the progreſs, of the millennium, Iſaiah, a few verſes farther, enters more particularly into the events which ſhall diſtinguiſh the firſt æra of that memorable period. *The lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be bowed down, and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low.—And upon* ALL *the high mountains, and upon* ALL *the hills*[39] *that are lifted up.—And they ſhall go*

[38] Numerous are the paſſages to which Brenius refers, for the purpoſe of proving this.

[39] i. e. Upon the greater and the leſſer kingdoms, for Dr. Lancaſter has obſerved, as analogy would lead us to expect, that *a hill*, as well as *a mountain*, is the ſymbol of a kingdom.

*into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth*[40], *for fear of the Lord, and for*[41] *the glory of his majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* This prophecy, which reſembles that of the ſixth ſeal, and appears in no ſmall degree to countenance the glorious doctrine of Equality of Rights, is claſſed by Mr. Whiſton[42] among thoſe, which relate to the deſtruction at Armageddon, and to the downfal of Antichriſt. The *ſhaking of the earth*, ſays Mr. Macculloch, a clergyman of Scotland, here 'intimates, that, at the period referred 'to, the nations of the world ſhould be violently agi-'tated, and terrible commotions excited[43].'

The prediction, to which I ſhall next conciſely refer, forms a principal part of the concluding prophecy of Haggai; and I am the rather induced to mention it, ſhort as it is, becauſe it furniſhes an undoubted ſpecimen of ſymbolic diction being immediately afterwards interpreted by words of a plain and obvious import[44]. In the name of that great Being, who decrees and ſuperintends the revolutions of the world, the prophet in the 21ſt and 22d verſes of the iid chapter ſays, *I will ſhake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will deſtroy the ſtrength of the kingdoms of the heathen.* That the latter part of this paſſage is a literal explication of the figurative language of the former part, is obſerved by Mr. Collyer[45] and by bp. Chandler[46]. To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks Mr.

[40] That this is a very proper and familiar image to expreſs terror, and drawn from actual obſervation and experience, bp. Lowth has ſhewn at length (in loc.)

[41] Or rather, as it is in the Tranſlations of bp. Lowth and Mr. Dodſon, *from the fear of Jehovah, and from the glory of his majeſty.*

[42] See his *Eſſ. on the Rev.* p. 361.

[43] Lect. on Iſaiah. 1791. [44] Look back to p. 291.

[45] The Sacred Interpreter, by David Collyer, late vicar of Coxwell, Berks, Carliſle, 1790, vol. I. p. 321.

[46] Def. of Chr. p. 205.

Thomas

Thomas Jeffery. 'The *ſhaking* of *the earth* is explained 'by the prophet himſelf, by ſhaking *the nations and* '*kingdoms* of the earth; and then *ſhaking the heavens* 'may very naturally refer to the altering *the govern-* '*ment* in them[47].' The prophecy contained in the 21ſt and 22d verſes of the iid ch. of Haggai 'plainly relates,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'to *the ſecond coming* of Chriſt, or to 'that illuſtrious appearance of his kingdom, which ſhall 'put a period to the kingdoms of the earth.—See Dan. 'ii. 44.'

Any prophecy of ſuperior *authority* to that of our Saviour it is impoſſible to cite. On this ſubject I can, however, refer the reader to one of much higher *antiquity*. It is in the ſecond Pſalm. This pſalm, which is applied to Jeſus in the Acts of the Apoſtles, 'contains,' ſays biſhop Patrick, 'a moſt illuſtrious prophecy of '*the kingdom* of Chriſt;' and accordingly Simeon De Muis, a much eſteemed commentator on the Pſalms, informs us, that it was regarded by celebrated writers of antiquity among the Jews as prophetic of the Meſſiah[48].

'If we compare this poem with the events of the life 'and reign of David, illuſtrious as they were; we find,' ſays Dr. Apthorp, 'the ideas and expreſſions too diſpro- 'portioned to the ſubject, to admit of a literal application. 'For neither were his enemies ſo powerful, nor their 'ſubmiſſion ſo complete, nor the reign of David ſo 'proſperous and extenſive, as to verify the amplitude of 'the ſtyle and compoſition[49].' 'If,' ſays Vitringa, 'the 'predicates of any ſubject can be underſtood, in their 'juſt emphaſis, of none but Chriſt; and if applied to 'any other ſubject give a feeble and unintereſting mean- 'ing: as in Iſai. xi. why ſhould we purſue a flying and

[47] Chriſtianity the Perfection of all Religion, Nat. and Rev. p. 343.

[48] Thoſe celebrated rabbis, Aben Ezra and Kimchi, are ſpecified by bp. Chandler, as maintaining this opinion. Def. of Chr. p. 212.

[49] Vol. II. p. 86.

'fallacious *ſhadow*, and not ſeize at once the ſolid *ſub-*
'*ſtance* of the prophecy? Eſpecially when the New
'Teſtament is our guide[50].'

The oppoſition, which princes and men in power were to carry on both againſt the propagation and againſt the progreſs of the goſpel, the iid Pſalm appears to point out in general terms. In the 2d verſe, David ſays, *the kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the rulers take counſel together, againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed.* Now ſuch were Pilate and Herod, and, as Mr. Sam. Clark obſerves on this verſe, 'other wicked kings in all 'ages;' and he pertinently refers to that parallel verſe in the Rev. (xvii. 14), where it is ſaid, that *the Ten Kings— ſhall make war with the Lamb.* But, ſays the pſalmiſt in the 4th and 5th verſes, *he that ſitteth in the heavens ſhall laugh: the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion: Then ſhall he ſpeak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his ſore diſpleaſure.* 'When they have ſpit their ve-
'nom,' ſays the ſame commentator, 'and ſpun their
'thread to its full length, and are ripe for deſtruction,
'he will manifeſt his fury againſt them, by the puniſh-
'ments he inflicts upon them.' The inſpired writer adds in the 6th verſe, *yet have I ſet my king upon my holy hill of Zion*[51]; and in the eighth, *I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance; and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.* 'Theſe words,' ſays Poole, 'declare the great amplitude of the kingdom
'of the Meſſiah.' How this is to be effected we are told in the next verſe, where the Deity is repreſented as ſolemnly addreſſing Chriſt in theſe tremendous words:

[50] Vitringa, in confirmation of what he here urges, ſpecifies various paſſages of the New Teſtament. De Canonibus Verbi Prophetici recte exponendi, cap. ii. can. xii.

[51] This expreſſion, as Poole remarks (in loc.) is ſometimes put 'for the 'Chriſtian Church.'

*thou*

*thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron*[52], *thou ſhalt daſh them in pieces like a potter's veſſel*[53]; that is, that deſcription of perſons, who had been previouſly mentioned, *the Kings and the Rulers of the earth*, who *ſet themſelves againſt* the Lord's *anointed*, and breathe hoſtility againſt the true ſpirit of his religion. The Hebrew word, here tranſlated *ſet* themſelves, Maimonides obſerves on this verſe, denotes firmneſs and perpetuity[54]; and, with reſpect to the obſtruction made to the progreſs of the Meſſiah's kingdom, the monarchs of the world have certainly acted a very decided and uniform part.

Returning to the Evangelical prophet[55] (for that is the title which the general ſuffrage of Chriſtians has conferred on Iſaiah), I ſhall cite from the xxivth chapter of his prophecies a remarkable paſſage, which is thought to have a particular reference to the war of Armageddon, to the fate of the princes who are engaged in it, and to the ſignal revolution which will be conſequent to their overthrow. That this chapter relates to the latter ages of the world is obſerved by Dr. Wells in his commentary upon it. The images, which the prophet chiefly employs in this xxivth chapter are ſuch, ſays biſhop Lowth, as denote great revolutions; 'revolutions, involving all 'orders and degrees of men, changing entirely the face 'of things, and deſtroying the whole polity both reli-'gious and civil.' After declaring that the earth ſhall be in a diſtreſſed and a deſolated ſtate, Iſaiah ſuppoſes a great and favourable change to take place, and accord-

[52] That is, ſays Simeon De Muis, with the ſword, as rabbies Ezra and Raſi interpret it.

[53] The reader of this verſe Mr. Sam. Clark pertinently refers to a parallel place in Daniel (ii. 44), where it is ſaid, *the God of heaven—ſhall break in pieces and conſume all theſe kingdoms.*

[54] *More Nevochim*, p. 18.

[55] He is ſo ſtyled, ſays Mr. Lowth (in Pref.), 'becauſe he foretold *the* 'Coming and *Kingdom* of the Meſſiah with greater clearneſs than any of the 'reſt.'

ingly ſays in v. 15 and 16, *glorify ye the Lord—in the iſles of the ſea. From the uttermoſt parts of the earth have we heard ſongs, even glory to the righteous.* Praiſe ye the Lord throughout the nations of Europe;[56] and it is not thence only, but from the remoteſt parts of the world, that the voice of joy is heard, and the praiſes of the juſt and the upright are now to be reſounded. After declaring in v. 19 and 20, that *the earth* (i. e. the ſymbolic earth) *is moved exceedingly*, and that *the earth ſhall move to and fro*, the prophet foretells in the two following verſes, that *it ſhall come to paſs in that Day*[57], *that the Lord ſhall puniſh the hoſt of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they ſhall be gathered together, as priſoners are gathered in the pit*[58], *and ſhall be ſhut up in the priſon, and after many days ſhall they be viſited.* To the war of Armageddon this paſſage is referred by Mr. Whiſton[59]; and Mr. Lowth ſays, 'I cannot find any explication of 'this verſe ſo agreeable to the natural ſenſe of the words, 'as that of a late learned writer upon the Revelation, 'c. xix. 6, who explains it of the kings of the earth, 'who made war with Chriſt and his ſaints at Arma-'geddon, Rev. xvi. 16.' *If* Mr. Lowth ſuppoſed, that all, engaged in the war of Armageddon againſt the kings of the earth, were to be men of an holy character, he was, I apprehend, in an error. When large bodies of men are united in accompliſhing the very beſt deſigns, not a few among them will neceſſarily be of very exceptionable morals.

[56] Look back to p. 431 and 432, where the expreſſion, *the iſles of the ſea*, is explained.

[57] 'In that Day. This phraſe often denotes in Iſaiah—an extraordinary 'ſeaſon, remarkable for ſome ſignal events of providence, called elſewhere, 'by way of excellence, *the Day* of the Lord.' Mr. Lowth on Iſa. iv. 2. See this latter expreſſion explained in p. 294.

[58] 'Or dungeon.' Mr. Lowth.

[59] See his *Eſſ. on the Rev.* p. 362.

With

With reſpect to *the kings of the earth* being *viſited after many days*, it may ſignify, ſays Matthew Henry, that 'they ſhall be *viſited in wrath*[60]; it is the ſame 'word in another form that is uſed, v. 21, *the Lord 'ſhall puniſh them:* they ſhall be reſerved to the day of 'execution as condemned criminals are.' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks Dr. Wells, '*They ſhall be viſited*, i. e. 'brought forth to public puniſhment.' That the word *viſited* in this paſſage is to be explained of puniſhment is obſerved by Glaſſius[61], by Brenius, and by Vitringa; and the laſt of theſe truly learned men declares it to be extremely clear, that this prophecy in its figurative ſenſe is to be explained of the very period, yet to come, which St. John treats of in the ſixth ſeal, and of the great events which he has there foretold. That I appeal to ſo many unaccompliſhed predictions in the Hebrew ſcriptures needs not to awaken in the reader any degree of ſurpriſe; for Sir I. Newton does not heſitate to declare, that 'there 'is ſcarce a prophecy in the Old Teſtament concerning 'Chriſt, which doth not, in ſomething or other, relate 'to his *ſecond coming*[62].'

Having quoted ſeveral paſſages from Iſaiah, I ſhall here take the opportunity of inſerting another, as it is a ſtriking one, though with the ſubject of the chapter it has only an indirect connexion.

'This prophet,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'ſeems to have been 'favoured with an entire view of the Goſpel-ſtate, from 'the very birth of the Meſſias, to that glorious period, 'when *the kingdoms of the world ſhall become the king-'doms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt*[63].' In correſpon-

[60] 'Thus this very phraſe, *after many days thou ſhalt be viſited*, is uſed, 'Ezek. xxxviii. 8.' Mr. Lowth in loc. And in this ſenſe of puniſhment it is underſtood by a crowd of Jewiſh rabbis, who have commented on this verſe.

[61] Philologia Sacra, 1711. p. 561.

[62] P. 132. [63] Pref. p. 4.

dence with this, Dr. Apthorp obſerves, that the three laſt verſes of ch. lvi. refer to 'the corruptions of Anti-'chriſt;' and the completion of this prophecy muſt, he declares, be ſought in the conduct of the 'biſhops and 'more eminent paſtors and the whole eccleſiaſtical or-'der[64].' To a large proportion of the prieſts, belonging to all the countries of Chriſtendom, it does, indeed, ſeem juſtly applicable: but there appears to be no ſolid reaſon, why Dr. Apthorp ſhould have reſtricted it, as he has done, to the clergy of the middle ages.

The verſes are expreſſed with the plainneſs of primitive times, and ſpeak the language of cenſure without reſerve. After foretelling in the preceding verſe, in the diction of ſymbols, that *the beaſts of the foreſt* would *come to devour*; the prophet ſays: *His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; ſleeping, lying down, loving to ſlumber*[65]. *Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough*[66], *and they are ſhepherds that cannot underſtand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain*[67] *from the higheſt to the loweſt*[68]. *Come ye, ſay*

[64] Vol. II. p. 186, 189.

[65] 'The image in this place is taken from the temple-ſervice; in which 'there was appointed a conſtant watch, day and night.—The watches in 'the Eaſt, even to this day, are performed by a loud cry from time to 'time of the watchmen, to mark the time, and that very frequently, and 'in order to ſhew that they themſelves are conſtantly attentive to their duty. 'Hence—the greateſt reproach to them is, *that they are dumb dogs; they can-'not bark.*' Bp. Lowth on c. lxii. 6.

[66] In the Verſions of bp. Lowth and Mr. Dodſon, the clauſe is thus rendered: *Yea, theſe dogs are of untamed appetite: they know not to be ſatisfied.* Upon this paſſage Vitringa pertinently cites our Lord's precaution (Mat. vii. 15), *Beware of falſe teachers, which come to you in ſheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

[67] 'They feed not the flock, but fleece it. They are every one *looking to* '*his own way*, minding his own private intereſts.' M. Henry.

[68] *From the higheſt to the loweſt* is the amended tranſlation of bp. Lowth and of Mr. Dodſon.

*they*

*they*,[69], *I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourſelves with ſtrong drink; and to-morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant.* Now, ſays Mr. Lowth, 'the 'word *ſhepherd* ſignifies *civil governors*, as well as ec-'*cleſiaſtical* guides,—whom the prophet compares to '*dumb dogs*, that give no warning of approaching thieves 'or enemies, but give themſelves up to ſleep and idle-'neſs.' That the word *watchmen* alſo is here applicable as well to civil as to eccleſiaſtical rulers, is obſerved by different commmentators[70]. It may, however, be proper to add, that, in the opinion of Vitringa, this prophecy has a reference only to the eccleſiaſtics of the Chriſtian world.

This prophetic accuſation, if it may be ſo ſtyled, reſolves itſelf into the diſtinct charges of indolence or inattentionto t he duty of their ſtations—treachery—rapacity—and immoderate luxury. What proportion of thoſe, who have occupied a gradation of ranks in the hierarchies, and in the governments, of modern Europe, muſt plead guilty to theſe weighty imputations, on the awful day of judgment and retribution, it is not for man to decide. But the preſent ſtate of the world offers, alas! to the leaſt diſcerning of human kind, too ample proofs of the melancholy effects, which have originated from their miſconduct and their uſurpations.

[69] That is, 'unto their brethren, by office, and in iniquity.' Poole in loc. If it be enquired, what deſcription of perſons have with *moſt frequency* attended at the banquet, and ſhared all the luxuries of the table, thoſe who belong to corrupt governments and corrupt hierarchies will, I believe, without heſitation be fixed on. This part of the prophecy muſt then be admitted to be pertinently applied.

[70] It is obſerved in the commentaries of Calvin, of Marlorat, a learned proteſtant of the 16th century, and of Dr. Wells, and in the Annotations of the Aſſembly of Divines, printed in the year 1657.

# CHAPTER XXV.

## ON THE SIXTH VIAL; AND SOME PROPHECIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT RELATING TO THE TURKS, THE ARABS, AND THE EGYPTIANS.

ON the fourth and the fifth vials many obſervations have been adduced. Of the two that are ſubſequent ſome account alſo ſhall be given.

Since, ſays an ingenious French commentator, 'the 'apocalypſe is nothing but a continuation of the pro-'phetical hiſtory of Daniel, concerning the fourth mo-'narchy, which is the Roman empire,' and ſince Mahometaniſm has overſpread the eaſtern part of the Roman empire; 'thence we may conclude, that both the vials 'and the trumpets have in part for their object the 'Turkiſh empire and the Mahometan religion[1].' As it is, indeed, agreed on all hands, that the book of revelation contains a prediction, deſcriptive of the conqueſts of the Turks, this circumſtance certainly affords a preſumption, that in the ſame ſacred book ſome ſpecific notice ſhould occur of the downfal of their empire.

I now cite the words of St. John. *And the ſixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the Eaſt might be prepared. The river Euphrates*, ſays Mr. Cradock, ſignifies 'the people inhabiting there-'about,' and 'theſe are the Turks that poſſeſs that part 'of the world,—ſo that this vial relates plainly to the 'ſixth trumpet.' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks that early

[1] New Syſt. of the Apoc. See the *Defence* of it, &c. p. 9, 10.

Scotch

Scotch commentator, Mr. Durham. 'By *waters* ordinarily in ſcripture are underſtood much people, and by *Euphrates* in particular, thoſe people that dwelt about it, as Iſa. viii. 7, the king of Aſſyria and his army are called *the waters of the river*, that is, of Euphrates, becauſe they dwelt about it. By the ſame reaſon, then, *Euphrates* here muſt be underſtood of the people for the time inhabiting there: and becauſe not only in verity of the thing, the Turks now poſſeſs that part of the world, but alſo (chap. ix. 14, &c. of this book) theſe ſame people were marked as bound about that river; and the looſing of them noted, as it were, the overflowing of that people's dominion like a flood from theſe parts. So there is no people that can be ſo reaſonably underſtood here as Turks, who were alſo underſtood there, ch. ix. 14. And this ſixth vial, mentioning that river, hath a ſpecial relation to the ſixth trumpet, where it was mentioned before.' I next quote from Mr. Fleming. 'The ſixth vial—will be poured out upon the Mahometan Antichriſt, as the former on the Papacy. And ſeeing the ſixth trumpet brought the Turks from beyond Euphrates, from croſſing which river they date their riſe; this ſixth vial dries up their waves, and exhauſts their power, as the means and way to prepare and diſpoſe the Eaſtern kings and kingdoms to renounce their Heatheniſh and Mahometan errors, in order to their receiving and embracing Chriſtianity. For I think this is the native import of the text, and not that the Jews are to be underſtood under this denomination of *the kings of the Eaſt*: which is ſuch an odd ſtraining of it to ſerve a turn, as I cannot admit of[2].'

[2] P. 77. This unnatural mode of interpreting the expreſſion (for I agree with Mr. Fleming that it is ſo) has received the ſuffrages of various annotators.

By

By Vitringa alſo it is obſerved, that this vial *may* reaſonably be regarded as predicting the ruin of the Ottoman empire. Whilſt, ſays he, this empire may be denoted by *the Euphrates*, *the kings of the Eaſt* may be the princes of Tartary and Perſia. He had before remarked, that 'nothing is more certain and better known, 'than that by *rivers*, in the language of the ſacred 'writings, brave and numerous nations are to be under-'ſtood.' The author of *the New Syſtem of the Apocalypſe*, after aſſerting, that '*the ſixth vial* deſtroyeth the 'empire of the Turks and their religion; which *the 'ſixth trumpet* had advanced to the higheſt pitch of its 'grandeur;' and that 'the river *Euphrates* does un-'doubtedly ſignify the people of that part of the world; 'as its being dried up denoteth the end of their empire;' remarks, 'that it is the proſperity of Mahometaniſm and 'Popery,' that 'hath kept back the Jews from the Chriſ-'tian religion, which thoſe two religions have ſo much 'disfigured.' But when theſe two falſe religions, which are grafted upon Chriſtianity, ſhall be extirpated and deſtroyed, he concludes, that the deſcendants of Abraham 'will open their eyes and be converted[3].'

Does *the great river Euphrates* denote the Turkiſh empire, then, ſays Mr. King, we do, at this very time, 'ſee this great emblematical river *drying up*. We ſee 'this empire fading away, and growing exceeding weak. 'It has already been in great danger from Ruſſia; and 'has yielded up much[4].' One 'great event,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'which I begin to flatter myſelf we may be 'looking forwards to, is the fall of the Turkiſh empire, 'when an end will be put to a ſyſtem of government, 'the moſt unfriendly to human happineſs, and to im-'provements of all kinds, that the world has ever groaned

[3] P. 258.

[4] *Morſels of Criticiſm*, p. 447.

'under.

'under[5].' Such a revolution all the friends of freedom cannot, indeed, but anticipate with pleaſure; and that it may be *immediate*, has been generally wiſhed.

Very ample is the power, very numerous are the armies, of the tyrant of Conſtantinople; but the deſpots of Vienna[6] and of Peterſburg are yet more formidable. It is from theſe ſovereigns of the North[7], who enforce the ſtricteſt rules of modern diſcipline, and rule over extenſive portions of the globe, inhabited by men at once fierce, ſubmiſſive, and unenlightened, that the victorious cauſe of freedom may be expected to meet the

[5] A Diſcourſe delivered in 1791 before the Supporters of the New College, Hackney, p. 28. That the ſixth vial denotes the deſtruction of the Turkiſh empire, Dr. Prieſtley thinks probable. See his Inſtitutes of Nat. and Rev. Rel. 2d. ed. vol. II. p. 424.

[6] Great, however, as is the power of the emperor and the houſe of Auſtria, there are circumſtances which ſeem to promiſe, that its demolition will not be poſtponed to any very diſtant time. Such are the immenſity of the Auſtrian debt, the unwieldy ſtructure of the Germanic ſyſtem, and the interfering intereſts of the princes who ſupport it, the hoſtile diſpoſitions and formidable forces of the French republic, her actual conqueſt of the Auſtrian Netherlands, the well-founded diſcontents which prevail in various parts of Germany, and the wide diffuſion of literature throughout many of its provinces. On the laſt of theſe circumſtances a curious fact ſhall be noticed. Dr. Wendeborn, in his *View of England*, publiſhed in 1791, ſpeaking of 'the number of books which are annually printed in 'Germany, compared with thoſe that appear in the ſame ſpace of time in 'England,' ſays, 'It is calculated with ſome certainty, that they amount 'on an average to 5000. I have, for ſix following years, calculated thoſe, 'which in Engliſh Reviews are announced annually, and the number of 'them, ſmall pamphlets and ſingle ſermons excepted, is, on an average, 'not much above 600. Conſequently, the proportion between books annually publiſhed in England and in Germany, is almoſt as one to nine.' vol. II. p. 13. A ſpeedy peace with the republic of France may perhaps delay the downfal of the houſe of Auſtria.

[7] The deſpots of the South, I mean thoſe of Naples and Turin, of Liſbon and Madrid, are not wanting in malevolence of diſpoſition; but happily there is no equality between the extent of their wiſhes and the extent of their power.

greateſt

greateſt pertinacity of oppoſition. Fearing, therefore, leſt the Turkiſh empire, were it now to fall to pieces, might perhaps, by the intervention of theſe confederated potentates, be moulded into more permanent deſpotiſms on the European model, and thus impart new vigour to the declining cauſe of tyranny; I ſcarcely know how to entertain the wiſh, that the ſovereignty of the Ottomans ſhould be overturned, antecedently to the introduction of ſome degree of light and liberty into the territories of the two Imperial courts. But perhaps theſe fears are vain: and it certainly muſt be admitted, that he, who has reflected on the depopulating ſpirit of the Turkiſh government, and contemplated the picture drawn by modern travellers of the wretched ſtate of its provinces, can hardly conceive it poſſible, that any change could occur, which could place their inhabitants in a ſituation more truly afflicting and abject.

After a recital of the ſixth vial, another prophecy, which occurs in the ſix laſt verſes of the xith chapter of Daniel, and is thought to refer to the Turks under the name of *the king of the North*, may be pertinently alleged. *At the time of the end ſhall the king of the South puſh at him*, i. e. at the Roman empire, and particularly the Eaſtern diviſion of it, *and the king of the North ſhall come againſt him like a whirlwind with chariots, and with horſemen, and with many ſhips; and he ſhall enter into the countries, and ſhall overflow and paſs over. He ſhall enter alſo into the glorious land, and many countries ſhall be overthrown: but theſe ſhall eſcape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He ſhall ſtretch forth his hand alſo upon the countries: and the land of Egypt ſhall not eſcape. But he ſhall have power over the treaſures of gold and of ſilver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Lybians and the Ethiopians ſhall*

*ſhall be at his ſteps. But tidings out of the Eaſt and out of the North ſhall trouble him: therefore he ſhall go forth with great fury to deſtroy, and utterly to make away many. And he ſhall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the ſeas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he ſhall come to his end, and none ſhall help him.*

That *the king of the North* ſignifies the Turkiſh power or empire, and *the king of the South*, that of the Saracens, is the general opinion of modern commentators; of Mede and Brightman, of Dr. More and Dr. Wells, of bp. Newton and Sir I. Newton, of Mr. Lowth, Mr. Wintle, and Mr. Samuel Clark.

'*At the time of the end*,' ſays bp Newton[8], 'that is '(as Mr Mede rightly expounds it[9]) in the latter days of 'the Roman empire, *ſhall the king of the South puſh at 'him:* that is the Saracens, who were of the Arabians, 'and came from the South; and under the conduct of 'the falſe prophet Mohammed and his ſucceſſors, made 'a religious or rather irreligious war upon the emperor 'Heraclius, and deprived him of Egypt and many of his 'fineſt provinces. They were only to *puſh at*, and ſorely 'wound the Greek empire, but they were not to ſubvert 'and deſtroy it. *And the king of the North ſhall come 'againſt him like a whirlwind with chariots and with 'horſemen, and with many ſhips, and he ſhall enter into 'the countries, and ſhall overflow and paſs over:* that is 'the Turks, who were originally of the Scythians, and 'came from the North; and after the Saracens ſeized on 'Syria, and aſſaulted with great violence the remains of 'the Greek empire, and in time rendered themſelves 'abſolute maſters of the whole. The Saracens diſmem-'bered and *weakened* the Greek empire, but the Turks 'totally ruined and *deſtroyed* it: and for this reaſon, we

[8] Vol. II. p. 170. [9] P. 1001.

'may

'may preſume, ſo much more is ſaid of the Turks than 'of the Saracens. Their *chariots* and their *horſemen* are 'particularly mentioned; becauſe their armies conſiſted 'chiefly of horſe, eſpecially before the inſtitution of the 'Janizaries;' and it is this circumſtance, ſays Mr. Lowth, 'which makes them carry an Horſe-tail before 'their chief officers, as an enſign of honour.' 'Their 'ſhips too,' obſerves bp. Newton, 'are ſaid to be many; 'and indeed without many ſhips they could never have 'gotten poſſeſſion of ſo many iſlands and maritime coun-'tries, nor have ſo frequently vanquiſhed the Venetians, 'who were at that time the greateſt naval power in Eu-'rope. What fleets, what armies were employed in the 'beſieging and taking of Conſtantinople, of Negropont, 'or Eubœa, of Rhodes, of Cyprus, and laſtly of Candy 'or Crete?' 'The prophet,' obſerves Mr. Wintle, 'has 'ſeveral times in this narrative expreſſed the progreſs and 'havock of war by the ravages of an inundation, and 'we find the like alluſion at the end of this verſe.' The words, *ſhall enter into the countries, and overflow, and paſs over*, 'give us,' ſays the bp. of Briſtol, 'an exact idea 'of their *overflowing* the weſtern parts of Aſia, and then '*paſſing over* into Europe, and fixing the ſeat of their 'empire at Conſtantinople, as they did under their 'ſeventh emperor Mohammed the ſecond.'

*He ſhall enter alſo into the glorious land, and many countries ſhall be overthrown.* 'The ſame expreſſion of '*the glorious land*,' ſays bp. Newton, 'was uſed before '(ver. 6); and in both places it is rendered by the Syriac 'tranſlator *the land of Iſrael.* Now nothing is better 'known, than that the Turks took poſſeſſion of the 'Holy Land, and remain maſters of it to this day.' *But theſe ſhall eſcape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.* 'Edom 'and Moab and the Ammonites,' ſays Mr. Wintle, 'are 'thus

thus joined, Jer. xxv. 21. 'and we meet with them again 'together, Iſa. xi. 14. 'They were all to the eaſt or ſouth-'eaſt of the Dead Sea, and now make a part of the ex-'tenſive range of the wild Arabs.' Sultan Selim, obſerves biſhop Newton, 'was the conqueror of the neighbouring 'countries, and annexed them to the Othman empire; 'but he could not make a complete conqueſt of the Ara-'bians.——Ever ſince his time, the Othman emperors 'have paid them an annual penſion of forty thouſand 'crowns of gold, for the ſafe paſſage of the caravans and 'pilgrims going to Mecca: and for their farther ſecurity 'the Sultan commonly orders the Baſha of Damaſcus to 'attend them with ſoldiers and water-bearers, and to take 'care that their numbers never fall ſhort of 14,000.' The Arabians, notwithſtanding theſe precautions, have ſometimes plundered the caravans; and though armies have marched againſt them, they have remained unſub-dued. 'Theſe free-booters have commonly been too 'cunning for their enemies: and when it was thought 'they were well nigh ſurrounded and taken, they have 'ſtill *eſcaped out of their hands*. So well doth this par-'ticular prediction, relating to ſome of the tribes of the 'Arabians, agree with that general one concerning the 'main body of the nation,' which is recorded in the xvith chapter of Geneſis.

*He ſhall ſtretch forth his hand alſo upon the countries.* 'This,' ſays the biſhop of Briſtol, 'implies, that his do-'minions ſhould be of large extent; and he hath *ſtretched 'forth his hand* upon many, not only Aſian and Eu-'ropean, but likewiſe African countries. Egypt in 'particular was deſtined to ſubmit to his yoke: *and the 'land of Egypt ſhall not eſcape*.—And the conqueſt of 'Egypt with the neighbouring countries follows next in 'order after the conqueſt of Judea, with the neighbour-'ing countries, as in the prophecy, ſo likewiſe in hiſtory.

'The Othman emperor Selim, having routed and ſlain 'Gauri ſultan of Egypt in a battle near Aleppo, became 'maſter of all Syria and Judea. He then marched into 'Egypt againſt' the new ſultan, whom he defeated, captured, and put to death; and ſo put an end to the government of the Mamalukes, and eſtabliſhed that of the Turks, in Egypt. 'The prophecy ſays particularly, that *he 'ſhould have power over the treaſures of gold and of ſilver, 'and over all the precious things of Egypt:* and hiſtory 'informs us, that when Cairo was taken,' "the Turks "rifled the houſes of the Egyptians, as well friends as "foes, and ſuffered nothing to be locked up or kept pri-"vate from them: and Selim cauſed 500 of the chiefeſt "families of the Egyptians to be tranſported to Conſtan-"tinople, as likewiſe a great number of the Mamalukes "wives and children, beſides the ſultan's treaſure and "other vaſt riches[10]." 'And ſince that time it is impoſ-'ſible to ſay what immenſe treaſures have been drained 'out of this rich and fertile, but oppreſſed and wretched 'country.' Edward King Eſq. in his *Morſels of Criticiſm*, gives a ſomewhat different turn to the paſſage under review. 'It ſeems,' ſays he, 'not a little remarkable, 'that the expreſſion is not *ſhould poſſeſs them*, but *ſhould 'have dominion over them*, ſo the Turks have really had 'the command of Egypt, and of its treaſures and deſirable 'things, without availing themſelves hardly at all of the 'benefit of thoſe riches[11].'

*And the Lybians and Ethiopians ſhall be at his ſteps.* 'And we read in hiſtory,' ſays biſhop Newton, 'that after 'the conqueſt of Egypt "the terror of Selim's many vic-"tories now ſpreading wide, the kings of Afric, border-"ing upon Cyrenaica, ſent their ambaſſadors with proſ-"fers to become his tributaries. Other more remote na-

[10] Savage's Abridgment of Knolles and Rycaut. p. 246.
[11] P. 510.

"tions

" tions alſo towards Ethiopia were eaſily induced to join " in amity with the Turks[12]." ' At this preſent time alſo ' many places in Africa beſides Egypt, as Algiers, Tunis, ' &c. are under the dominion of the Turks. One thing ' more is obſervable with regard to the fate of Egypt, that ' the particular prophecy coincides exactly with the ge- ' neral one, as it did before in the inſtance of Arabia. It ' was foretold by Ezekiel, that Egypt ſhould always be *a* ' *baſe kingdom*, and ſubject to *ſtrangers*; and here it is ' foretold, that in the latter times it ſhould be made a pro- ' vince to the Turks.'

The two next verſes, in the opinion of the ſeveral commentators whom I have enumerated, remain to be fulfilled. *But tidings out of the Eaſt and out of the North ſhall trouble him; therefore he ſhall go forth with great fury to deſtroy, and utterly to make away many.* With reſpect to the *tidings out of the Eaſt*, theſe, ſays Dr. More, ' may very well contemporize with the ſixth vial, ' which is poured out upon *the river Euphrates*, whereby ' its *waters are dryed up*, and a *way to the kings of the* ' *Eaſt prepared*[13], which ſhews ſome great mutation of ' affairs and jeopardy, that the Turkiſh empire in thoſe ' Eaſtern parts will ſeem to be in.'

' The Perſians,' ſays biſhop Newton, ' are ſeated to ' the Eaſt of the Othman dominions, and the Ruſſians ' to the North. Perſia hath, indeed, of late years, been ' miſerably torn and diſtracted by inteſtine diviſions; but ' when it ſhall unite again in a ſettled government under ' one ſovereign, it may become again, as it hath frequently ' been, a dangerous rival and enemy to the Othman em- ' peror. The power of Ruſſia is growing daily;' and ' the Porte is at all times jealous of the junction of the two

[12] Savage, ibid, p. 248.

[13] That this prophecy of Daniel, and the ſixth vial are contemporaneous, is thought probable alſo by Dr. Prieſtley. Inſtitutes of Nat. and Rev. Rel. vol. II. p. 424.

'powers of Perſia and Ruſſia, and exerts all its policy to 'prevent it.' 'It is,' ſays Mr. King, an 'aſtoniſhing co-'incidence of circumſtances; that as the whole Ruſſian 'dominions lie North of the Turkiſh dominions; ſo the 'exertions of Ruſſia have been not only in the North; 'but in a moſt remarkable manner in the *Eaſt*; where 'vaſt advantages of commerce, and of extent of domi-'nion, have been obtained by the Ruſſians towards 'China[14].'

*And he ſhall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the ſeas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he ſhall come*[14] *to his end, and none ſhall help him. The glorious holy mountain between the Seas*, in the opinion of bp. Newton, muſt ſignify 'ſome mountain in the Holy Land, 'which lieth *between the ſeas*, the Dead Sea on the Eaſt 'and the Mediterranean on the Weſt.—There the Turk 'ſhall incamp with all his power, *yet he ſhall come to 'his end, and none ſhall help him*, ſhall help him ef-'fectually, or deliver him.'

As there has been incidental mention in the preſent chapter of two ancient predictions, the one relating to the Arabs, and the other to Egypt; and as both of them are remarkable, and they are both at this time fulfilling, I ſhall tranſcribe them, and endeavour to elucidate their completion by a mixture of remarks and quotations. The remarks neceſſary to explain them, from the nature of the ſubjects, and the ſituation of the countries, perfectly accord with, and may naturally accompany, the obſervations which have occupied the preceding part of the chapter. Both theſe prophecies have been commented upon at conſiderable length by bp. Newton[15] and Dr. Worthington[16]; but they certainly have not precluded all additional remark.

[14] Morſels of Criticiſm, p. 511.

[15] In his iid and xiith Diſſertations, p. 37—63; p. 378—398.

[16] In the ixth, xith, and xiith of his Diſcourſes, p. 316—375; 419—494.

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It is in the xvith ch. of Geneſis, that a prophetic delineation of the character of Iſhmael and his poſterity occurs. Now Iſhmael ſettled in Arabia[17]; and his poſterity have never been diſpoſſeſſed of that country; and it may be obſerved, that there is ſcarcely a country in the world, where ſo ſmall a portion of foreign blood has been mixed with that of the natives. *And the angel of the Lord ſaid unto* Hagar, *I will multiply thy ſeed exceedingly, that it ſhall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord ſaid unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and ſhalt bear a ſon, and ſhalt call his name Iſhmael; becauſe the Lord hath heard thy affliction*[18]. *And he will be a wild man; his hand will be againſt every man, and every man's hand againſt him; and he ſhall dwell in the preſence of all his brethren*[19]. And in the following chapter it is ſaid, *I will make him a great nation*; a declaration, which was communicated by the moſt High to Abraham,

[17] See Geneſis, ch. xxi. 21, and xxv. 13—18, with the geographical obſervations of the commentators; and Joſephus (Antiq. l. i. c. 13). That the poſterity of Iſhmael lived in Arabia, is obſerved by *all* the Oriental writers, according to biſhop Patrick (on Gen. xxi. 21). In the xxvth ch. of Geneſis, where the twelve ſons of Iſhmael are enumerated, it is obſerved, that Nebaioth was the eldeſt. 'As,' ſaith bp. Patrick (in loc.), 'he was 'the firſt-born of Iſhmael, ſo his poſterity gave the denomination to the 'whole country of Arabia Petræa, which Pliny, Strabo, and Ptolemy call 'Nabatæa; and ſometimes other authors call Nabathis: as the inhabitants 'were called Nabatæi, who are mentioned alſo by Dionyſius Periegetes, 'in his Deſcription of the world, and by Plutarch in the life of Demetrius.'

[18] Dr. Geddes tranſlates, *whoſe name thou ſhalt call Iſhmael* [God attendeth], *becauſe the Lord hath attended to thy affliction.*

[19] V. 10, 11, 12. Dr. Geddes tranſlates, *and in the face of all his brethren he will pitch his tents.* That is, ſays this learned writer, he will bid them 'all defiance, conformably to what is ſaid of him before.' My next quotation is from Calvin (in loc.), 'It is in the firſt place to be deſired that 'we ſhould have peace with all men. Becauſe this is denied to Iſhmael, 'what is next in order is given to him, that he ſhould not yield to his 'enemies, but ſhould be brave, and powerful in repelling their attacks, 'But he does not ſpeak of the perſon of the man, but of his whole pro-'geny.'

the founder of thoſe two celebrated nations, the Arabs and the Jews[20].

Iſhmael was to be the parent of a great nation; and accordingly, though it is admitted, that he was not the ſole founder of all the Arabian tribes, there is reaſon to believe, that the families of his twelve ſons, penetrating a country which was before unoccupied, and gaining their ſubſiſtence by hunting, were widely ſcattered, and that his deſcendants rapidly multiplied and ſoon conſtituted a numerous people. 'The deſcendants of Iſhmael were,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'a conſiderable nation in very early 'times.' At preſent, 'all the Northern coaſts of Africa 'abound with Arabs; Paleſtine is now almoſt entirely 'occupied by them; they alſo ſtill retain their ancient 'ſeats, and are as numerous there as ever[21].'

Iſhmael, it is predicted, *will be a wild man.* The Hebrew word 'here joined with *man* ſignifies,' ſays bp. Patrick, '*a wild aſs:* and ſo is well tranſlated by Bo-'chart, *tam ferus quam onager.*' 'But what,' aſks bp. Newton, 'is the nature of the creature, to which Iſhmael 'is ſo particularly compared? It cannot', ſays the prelate, 'be deſcribed better than it is in the—book of Job '(xxxix. 5, &c.), *who hath ſent out the wild aſs free? 'or who hath looſed the bands of the wild aſs. Whoſe 'houſe I have made the wilderneſs, and the barren land 'his dwellings. He ſcorneth the multitude of the city, 'neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range 'of the mountains is his paſture, and he ſearcheth after 'every green thing.* Iſhmael therefore and his poſterity 'were to be wild, fierce, ſavage, ranging in the deſerts, 'and not eaſily ſoftened and tamed to ſociety: and who-

[20] It is obſervable, that the language of the Arabs 'is derived from the 'ſame original ſtock with the Hebrew, Syriac, and the Chaldæan tongues.' Gibbon's Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. IX. p. 239.

[21] Inſtitutes of Nat. and Rev. Rel. vol. I. p. 405.

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'ever hath read or known any thing of this people know-'eth this to be their true and genuine character.' Like the wild aſs they were alſo to be perfectly free, impatient of controul, and the ſole directors of their own move-ments. 'The ſlaves of domeſtic tyranny,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'may vainly exult in their *national* indepen-'dence; but the Arab is *perſonally* free[22].'

Of Iſhmael it is ſaid, that *he dwelt in the wilderneſs, and became an archer*[23]; 'and the ſame,' ſays bp. New-ton, 'is no leſs true of his deſcendants than of himſelf. 'He *dwelt in the wilderneſs*; and his ſons ſtill inhabit the 'ſame wilderneſs, and many of them neither ſow nor 'plant according to the beſt accounts ancient and mo-'dern.' 'There is no ſuch name,' ſays Dr. Shaw, as that of *wild Arabs*, 'peculiar to any one particular clan 'or body of them, they being *all the ſame, with the like* 'inclinations, when a proper opportunity or temptation 'offers itſelf[24].'

The *hand* of the Iſhmaelite, it is predicted, *will be againſt every man, and every man's hand againſt him.* 'And it is well known,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'that the 'Arabs, and, probably, *the Arabs only*, of all the nations 'of the world, have conſtantly lived in a ſtate of hoſtility 'with all mankind[25].' 'David,' ſays Dr. Worthington, 'bemoans the hardſhip of his caſe, that he was conſtrain-

[22] Vol. IX. p. 233. 'If,' ſays Gibbon, 'the Arabian princes abuſe 'their power, they are quickly puniſhed by the deſertion of their ſubjects, 'who had been accuſtomed to a mild and parental juriſdiction. Their ſpi-'rit is free, their ſteps are unconfined, the deſert is open, and the tribes 'and families are held together by a mutual and voluntary compact.' In a tribe of Arabs, ſays Volney, 'nothing can be tranſacted without the 'conſent of a majority;' and if a chief were to 'kill an Arab, it would 'be almoſt impoſſible for *him* to eſcape puniſhment; the reſentment of the 'offended party would pay no reſpect to his dignity.' Travels, vol. I. p. 402.

[23] Gen. xxi. 20.

[24] Shaw's Travels, pref. p. 10.

[25] Ut ſupra, p. 406.

'ed to dwell in the tents of Kedar, a tribe of the Arabs; 'whither he was forced to flee for refuge from his ene-'mies; which was but exchanging one enemy for ano-'ther, as he himſelf complains. *My ſoul hath long dwelt* '*among them that are enemies to peace. I labour for* '*peace: but when I ſpeak unto them thereof, they make* '*them ready for battle*[26].' In ſpeaking of the Arabian tribes, Mr. Gibbon ſays, 'the caravans that traverſe the 'deſert are ranſomed or pillaged; and their neighbours, 'ſince the remote times of Job and Seſoſtris[27], have been 'the victims of their rapacious ſpirit. If a Bedoween diſ-'covers from afar a ſolitary traveller, he rides furiouſly 'againſt him, crying, with a loud voice, "Undreſs thy-"ſelf, thy aunt *(my wife)* is without a garment." A ready 'ſubmiſſion entitles him to mercy; reſiſtance will pro-'voke the aggreſſor, and his own blood muſt expiate the 'blood, which he preſumes to ſhed in legitimate de-'fence[28].'

The year 1757 afforded a remarkable inſtance of the plundering ſpirit of the wanderers of Arabia[29]. Aſſembled in immenſe numbers, and irritated on account of not having received a tribute they had claimed of the Turks, they attacked and pillaged the caravan of Mecca, conducted by the Pacha of Damaſcus; and of the 60,000 pilgrims and travellers of which it was compoſed, 20,000

[26] Pſ. cxx. 5, 6, 7.

[27] 'Obſerve the firſt chapter of Job, and the long wall of 1500 ſtadia, 'which Seſoſtris built from Peluſium to Heliopolis (Diodor. Sicul. tom. I. 'l. i. p. 67).' Gibbon.

[28] Gibbon, vol. IX. p. 236.

[29] 'It is a ſingular proof of the predatory ſpirit of the Arabs, that al-'though all their independent tribes are zealous Mahomedans, yet they 'make no ſcruple of plundering the caravans of pilgrims, while engaged 'in performing one of the moſt indiſpenſable duties of their religion.' Dr. Robertſon's Hiſt. Diſq. on India, 8vo, p. 404.

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are ſaid to have been deſtroyed by hunger, by thirſt, and by the ſword of the Arabs[30].

As the hand of the Arab was to be raiſed up againſt every man, ſo every man's hand was to be lifted up againſt him. Accordingly the moſt powerful neighbours of the Arabs, the Perſians and the Turks, are, at this very time, accuſtomed to carry on frequent hoſtilities againſt them. When the Arabs, ſays Mr. Hanway, 'plunder caravans 'travelling through their territories, they conſider it as re-'priſals on the Turks and Perſians, who *often* make in-'roads into their country, and carry away their corn and 'their flocks[31].' The Turks, ſays Volney, '*never* ceaſe 'to wage ſecret or open war againſt them. The Pachas 'ſtudy every occaſion to haraſs them. Sometimes they 'conteſt with them a territory which they had let to them, 'and at others demand a tribute which they never agreed 'to pay[32].'

Nor do the natives of Arabia carry on only foreign hoſtilities. Perpetually is the hand of Arab lifted up againſt Arab. 'The temper of a people, thus armed 'againſt mankind, was,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'doubly in-'flamed by the *domeſtic* licence of rapine, murder, and 'revenge. In the conſtitution of Europe, the right of 'peace and war is now confined to a ſmall, and the ac-

[30] See Volney's Travels, vol. II. p. 103, 257, 273, 341; Gibbon's Decl. and Fall of the Roman Emp. vol. IX. p. 231; bp. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. II. p. 176; and Travels through Cyprus, Syria, &c. by the Abbé Mariti, vol. II. p. 117.

[31] Hanway's Travels, 1753, 4to. vol. IV. p. 221.

[32] Travels through Syria and Egypt, in the years 1783, 1784, and 1785, by M. C. F. Volney, tranſlated from the French, 1787. Vol. I. p. 399. The 'accuracy' of Volney, ſays Dr. Robertſon, 'is well known' (Hiſt. Diſq. on India, 8vo, p. 402). Volney, ſays Mr. Gibbon, is 'the laſt and 'moſt judicious of our Syrian travellers;' and, ſpeaking of Egypt, he ſays, 'we are amuſed by Savary, and inſtructed by Volney. I wiſh the latter 'could travel over the globe.' Vol. IX. p. 224, 448.

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'tual exercise to a much smaller, list of respectable po-
'tentates; but each Arab, with impunity and renown,
'might point his javelin against the life of his country-
'man.—Of the time of ignorance which preceded Ma-
'homet, 1700 battles are recorded by tradition: hostility
'was embittered by the rancour of civil faction; and the
'recital, in prose or verse, of an obsolete feud was suffi-
'cient to rekindle the same passions among the descen-
'dants of the hostile tribes. In private life, every man,
'at least every family, was the judge and avenger of his
'own cause. The nice sensibility of honour, which
'weighs the insult rather than the injury, sheds its deadly
'venom on the quarrels of the Arabs: the honour of their
'women, and of their beards, is most easily wounded; an
'indecent action, a contemptuous word, can be expiated
'only by the blood of the offender; and such is their pa-
'tient inveteracy, that they expect whole months and
'years the opportunity of revenge.—The refined malice
'of the Arabs refuses even the head of the murderer, sub-
'stitutes an innocent to the guilty person, and transfers
'the penalty to the best and most considerable of the race
'by whom they have been injured. If he falls by their
'hands, they are exposed in their turn to the danger of
'reprisals, the interest and principal of the bloody debt
'are accumulated; the individuals of either family lead a
'life of malice and suspicion, and fifty years may some-
'times elapse before the account of revenge be finally
'settled[33].'

[33] Vol. IX. p. 237—239. To the statement of Mr. Gibbon it will be sufficient to add two short passages from two modern travellers. 'The 'different tribes,' says Mr. Hanway, 'are *often* at war with each other.' Ut supra, vol. IV. p. 222. They are not, says Dr. Shaw, 'to be accused 'for plundering strangers only, or whomsoever they may find unarmed or 'defenceless; but for those many implacable and hereditary animosities, 'which *continually* subsist among themselves.' Shaw's Travels, 1757, 4to, p. 238.

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'That *his hand ſhould be againſt every man, and every 'man's hand againſt him*, and yet that he ſhould be able 'to *dwell in the preſence of all his brethren*,' is, ſays bp. Newton, extraordinary. 'But extraordinary as it was, 'this alſo hath been fulfilled.' Syria, Paleſtine, Egypt, and Perſia are the countries that touch, and may be ſaid to ſurround, Arabia; thoſe countries have OFTEN been conquered; but the land inhabited by the deſcendants of Iſhmael has NEVER been ſubdued[34].

'It cannot,' ſays bp. Newton, 'be pretended, that no 'probable attempts were ever made to conquer them; for 'the greateſt conquerors in the world have almoſt all in 'their turns attempted it, and ſome of them have been 'very near effecting it. It cannot be pretended, that the 'dryneſs or inacceſſibleneſs of their country hath been

[34] Arabia, or ſome particular diſtricts of it, was attacked by the following generals and nations: by Seſoſtris, or Seſac, king of Egypt, according to Sir I. Newton in the year 1010, B. C.; in the ſixth century before the Chriſtian æra by Cyrus, the founder of the Perſian monarchy, and by his ſon Cambyſes; in the year 311 by Athenæus, the general of Antigonus, and by his ſon Demetrius; in the year 216 by Antiochus the great; about the year 187 by Hyrcanus; in the year 63 by the Romans under the command of Pompey; in the year 55 by the Roman general, Gabinius; in the year 32 by Herod, king of Judea and the ally of Marc Anthony; in the year 22 by Ælius Gallus, one of the generals of Auguſtus; about the year 106 A. C. by the emperor Trajan; about the year 193 by the emperor Severus; in the year 523 by Caled, king of Abyſſinia; in the year 570 by Choſroes, or Nurſhirvan, the ſovereign of Perſia and India; in the year 1173 by an army of Curds or Carduchians, under the orders of the great Saladin, Sultan of Egypt, and commanded by the brother of the Sultan; in the year 1538 by the lieutenant of Soliman the Iſt, emperor of the Turks; and in 1568 by Selim the IId. From the year 570 to 1173 a wide interval elapſed. The length of the period ought not, however, to ſurprize the reader, for long after the conqueſts of Mahomet and the Arabian caliphs, the power or the fame of Arabia was ſufficient to guard that country from invaſion. To have given particular authorities for all theſe facts and dates would have occupied too large a ſpace. The *greater* part of them are ſtated, and ſupported by authorities, in the XXth vol. of the Ancient Univerſal Hiſtory, where *a Diſſertation* occurs *on the Independency of the Arabs* (p. 196—250).

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'their preſervation; for their country hath been often 'penetrated, though never entirely ſubdued.' 'I believe,' ſays Dr. Delany, 'it will be allowed, that an army, well 'provided, may very well be ſuppoſed capable of doing, 'what caravans are now known to do every day[35].'

By him who contemplates the map of Arabia, it will perhaps be urged, that notwithſtanding the moſt powerful princes and the beſt diſciplined armies have often ſpread their conqueſts to its frontiers; yet its having ſucceſsfully reſiſted every attack is to be accounted for by the immenſe number of inhabitants, which a country ſo extenſive muſt doubtleſs contain. But this is a ſtatement which an enquiry into facts will completely invalidate. The inhabitants of Arabia, ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'might be out-numbered by the ſubjects of a fertile and 'induſtrious province[36].' But if the *populouſneſs* of Arabia has not prevented its conqueſt, its *extent*, it may perhaps be urged, may have preſerved its independence. Every one, however, who is moderately acquainted with the hiſtory of the revolutions of Aſia, knows, that the ſize of Arabia is very inconſiderable, when it is compared with the extent of the regions which the conquerors of the Eaſt have been accuſtomed to ſubdue or to over-run[37]. In

[35] *Revelation examined with Candor*, 1732, vol. II. p. 130.

[36] Vol. IX. p. 223.

[37] In order to illuſtrate the aſſertion of the text, I ſhall introduce a conciſe narrative of the conqueſts of Attila, Zingis, and Tamerlane. Attila was king of the Huns in the 5th century. He united, ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'the two mighty king-'doms of Germany and Scythia; and thoſe vague appellations, 'when they are applied to his reign, may be underſtood with an 'ample latitude.' Now 'from the mouth of the Danube to the 'ſea of Japan the whole *longitude* of Scythia is about 110 de-'grees, which, in that parallel, are equal to more than 5000 'miles.' With reſpect to the *latitude* of Scythia or Tartary, it reaches from the 40th degree, which touches the wall of China, above

In the nature of their country there are, it may be added, two circumſtances, unfavourable to the independence of

above a thouſand miles to the northward, to the frozen regions of Siberia. The kingdoms of Scandinavia, it may be added, were in the number of the provinces of Attila; his troops penetrated into the interior of Perſia; he invaded, and for ſome time occupied, the Eaſt of Europe, for the ſpace of 500 miles, from the Hadriatic to the Euxine, and from the Helleſpont to the ſuburbs of Conſtantinople; the Burgundians of the Rhine were almoſt exterminated by one of his lieutenants; from the Rhine and the Moſelle he advanced into the heart of Gaul as far as Orleans; and, on another occaſion, he paſſed the Alps, and ravaged a conſiderable part of Italy. 'When Attila collected his 'military force, he was able to bring into the field an army of 'five, or, according to another account, of ſeven hundred thou-'ſand Barbarians.'

Early in the 13th century, Zingis was khan of the Moguls. Although he originally ruled over only thirty or forty thouſand families, he ſucceſſively ſubdued the Tartar hords, 'who pitched their 'tents between the wall of China and the Volga; and the Mo-'gul emperor became the monarch of the paſtoral world.' His troops accompliſhed the circuit of the Caſpian ſea, he reduced the countries which lie between that ſea and the Indus, and the five northern provinces of China were added to his empire. When he invaded the Southern Aſia, 'ſeven hundred thouſand 'Moguls and Tartars are ſaid to have marched' under his ſtandard and that of his four ſons. In a ſubſequent part of the 13th century, and in the reigns of his ſucceſſors, the Moguls penetrated into Syria, carried their arms into Bulgaria and Thrace, overflowed with reſiſtleſs violence the kingdoms of Armenia and Anatolia, and conquered the populous empires of Perſia and China.

Of the celerity of their motions, and the extent of their conqueſts, ſome idea may be formed from Mr. Gibbon's account of the victorious march of the troops of Batou. No ſooner had Octai, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Zingis, 'ſubverted the northern 'empire of China, than he reſolved to viſit with his arms the 'moſt remote countries of the Weſt. Fifteen hundred thouſand 'Moguls and Tartars were inſcribed on the military roll; of 'theſe the great khan ſelected a third, which he entruſted to the 'command of his nephew Batou,—After a feſtival of forty days,

'Batou

of the Arabs: the heat of the climate, and the general character of Arabia, which abounds with vaſt plains. It is

'Batou ſet forwards on this great expedition; and ſuch was 'the ſpeed and ardour of his innumerable ſquadrons, that in leſs 'than ſix years they had meaſured a line of ninety degrees of 'longitude, a fourth part of the circumference of the globe. 'The great rivers of Aſia and Europe, the Volga and Kama, 'the Don and Boryſthenes, the Viſtula and Danube, they 'either ſwam with their horſes, or paſſed on the ice, or traverſed 'in leathern boats.—By the firſt victories of Batou, the remains 'of national freedom were eradicated in the immenſe plains of 'Turkeſtan and Kipzak. In his rapid progreſs, he over-ran the 'kingdoms, as they are now ſtiled, of Aſtracan and Cazan; and 'the troops, which he detached towards mount Caucaſus, ex-'plored the moſt ſecret receſſes of Georgia and Circaſſia. The 'civil diſcord of the great dukes, or princes, of Ruſſia, betrayed 'their country to the Tartars. They ſpread from Livonia to the 'Black Sea, and both Moſcow and Kiow, the modern and the 'ancient capitals, were reduced to aſhes.—From the permanent 'conqueſt of Ruſſia, they made a deadly, though tranſient, inroad 'into the heart of Poland, and as far as the borders of Germany. 'The cities of Lublin and Cracow were obliterated: they ap-'proached the ſhores of the Baltic; and in the battle of Lignitz, 'they defeated the dukes of Sileſia, the Poliſh palatines, and the 'great maſter of the Teutonic order.' They then 'turned aſide 'to the invaſion of Hungary;—the whole country north of the 'Danube was loſt in a day, and depopulated in a ſummer;—'and of all the cities and fortreſſes of Hungary, three alone ſur-'vived the Tartar invaſion.—After waſting the adjacent king-'doms of Servia, Boſnia, and Bulgaria, Batou ſlowly retreated 'from the Danube to the Volga to enjoy the rewards of victory 'in the city and palace of Serai.'

'Even the poor and frozen regions of the North attracted the 'arms of the Moguls,' and a detachment of them ſettled in the wilds of Siberia. 'In this ſhipwreck of nations, ſome ſurpriſe 'may be excited by the eſcape of the Roman empire, whoſe re-'lics, at the time of the Mogul invaſion, were diſmembered by 'the Greeks and Latins.' Indeed 'had the Tartars undertaken the 'ſiege, Conſtantinople *muſt* have yielded to the fate of Pekin, 'Samarcand, and Bagdad.'

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is in the cold or temperate regions of the North, that the flame of perſonal liberty is accuſtomed to burn with the brighteſt

The conqueſts of Timour or Tamerlane were atchieved towards the concluſion of the 14th, and at the beginning of the 15th, century. To deſcribe 'the lines of march, which he repeatedly 'traced over the continent of Aſia,' would be a taſk of extreme difficulty. His principal conqueſts it will be ſufficient briefly to ſtate. After having for ſome months led the life of a vagrant and an outlaw, he at length, at the age of 34, made himſelf maſter of his native country of Tranſoxiana, a fertile kingdom, 500 miles in length and breadth. But this ſatisfied not his ambition. 'Timour aſpired to the dominion of the world.' The Mogul prince invaded and conquered Perſia; and 'the whole courſe of 'the Tigris and Euphrates, from the mouth to the ſources of 'thoſe rivers, was reduced to his obedience.' Turkeſtan, or the eaſtern Tartary, was entered and ſubdued by him; and 'his moſt 'diſtant camp was two months journey, or 480 leagues to the 'north-eaſt of Samarcand, and his emirs, who traverſed the 'rivers Irtiſh, engraved in the foreſts of Siberia a rude memo-'rial of their exploits.' Kipzak, or the weſtern Tartary, he alſo invaded 'with ſuch mighty powers, that 13 miles were meaſured 'from his right to his left wing.' After a march of five months in which 'they rarely beheld the footſteps of man, and their 'daily ſubſiſtence was often truſted to the fortune of the chace,' his forces encountered and defeated thoſe of the powerful Khan, who ruled over the Mogul empire of the North, and who had recently entered the dominions of Timour at the head of 90,000 horſe. 'The purſuit of a flying enemy carried Timour into the 'tributary provinces of Ruſſia,' and 'Moſcow trembled at the 'approach of the Tartar.' But 'ambition and prudence recalled 'him to the ſouth.' After croſſing the Indus and the Ganges, and fighting ſeveral battles with the princes of Hindoſtan, he made himſelf maſter of that rich and extenſive country. Syria and Armenia were afterwards ravaged by him, and Anatolia and Georgia were ſubjugated by the arms of the Mogul. In the memorable battle of Angora he defeated an army of 400,000 horſe and foot, commanded by the Turkiſh emperor, Bajazet. 'Aſtracan, Cariſme, Delhi, Iſpahan, Bagdad, Alep-'po, Damaſcus, Bourſa, Smyrna, and a thouſand others, were 'ſacked.

brighteſt luſtre. The heat of a ſouthern ſun is unfriendly to exertion, and has ever been found to facilitate the eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm[38]. And it is obſerved by Volney, that 'mountainous countries, alone, afford to liberty its 'great reſources. It is there,' ſays this judicious Frenchman, 'that ſkill and addreſs, favoured by ſituation, ſup-'ply the deficiency of numbers.—In flat countries, on the 'contrary, the firſt tumult is ſuppreſſed, and the ignorant 'peaſant, who does not even know how to throw up an 'entrenchment, has no other reſource but in the clemen-'cy of his maſter, and a quiet ſubmiſſion to ſlavery. We 'ſhall therefore find that no general principle can be ad-'vanced more true than the following: *That plains are 'the habitation of indolence and of ſlavery, and moun-'tains the country of energy and freedom*[39].'

'Aſia,' ſays Colonel Dow, 'the ſeat of the greateſt 'empires, has been always the nurſe of the moſt abject 'ſlaves. The mountains of Perſia have not been able to 'ſtop the progreſs of the tide of deſpotiſm, neither has it

'ſacked, or burnt, or utterly deſtroyed, in his preſence, and by 'his troops.—From the Irtiſh and Volga to the Perſian gulf, 'and from the Ganges to Damaſcus and the Archipelago, Aſia 'was in the hand of Timour; his armies were invincible, his 'ambition was boundleſs;' and it was on his march towards China, at the head of 200,000 of his ſelect and veteran troops, that the Mogul emperor expired, after having ſkilfully planned the invaſion and conqueſt of that great empire. Gibbon, vol. IV. p. 358; VI. p. 4—53, 108, 122; XI. p. 408—429; XII. p. 4—45.

[38] 'The cities of Mecca and Medina,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'preſent, in the heart of Aſia, the form, or rather the ſubſtance, 'of a commonwealth.' Vol. IX. p. 234. That the hiſtorian regarded this fact as an unuſual phænomenon in the political world, the manner in which he notices it unequivocally ſhews.

[39] Travels, vol. I. p. 200. The Arabs are ſpecified by Volney as an exception to this general principle.

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'been frozen in its courſe through the plains of the 'Northern Tartary by the chill air of the North.' But the Arabs of the deſert, he obſerves, 'remain uncon-'quered by arms, by luxury, by corruption; they alter 'not their language, they adhere to their cuſtoms and 'manners, they retain their dreſs[40].'

There are trees, which, being unaſſiſted by cultivation and the labours of man, retain, even after the lapſe of many ages, their primeval ſhape and wildneſs, and ſtrongly reſemble thoſe which firſt ſhed their bloſſoms on the virgin-ſoil. Thus although Iſhmael and his ſons, by whom a principal part of the land of Arabia was planted, lived in a period of the moſt remote antiquity, and in the very infancy of ſociety; yet his modern deſcendants, inhabiting a country, that has never been ſubdued, or completely explored by the moſt intrepid conqueror, vary as little from their primitive manners, as the trees of an immenſe foreſt, which has never been cleared by ruſtic induſtry, and the receſſes of which have never been penetrated by the moſt adventurous traveller, differ from thoſe parent-trees, which firſt occupied the wilderneſs's wide expanſe.

On the characteriſtic reſemblance of the Arabs in general to their earlieſt anceſtors, I might refer the reader to a crowd of ancient writers and of modern travellers; but it will be ſufficient to cite the teſtimonies of two celebrated infidels, who are competent, and certainly impartial, evidences on a fact of this nature. 'The ſame 'life,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'is *uniformly* purſued by the 'roving tribes of the deſert, and in the portrait of the 'modern Bedoweens, we may trace the features of their

[40] *Diſs. on the Origin of Deſpotiſm in Hindoſtan*, p. 2, prefixed to the IIId vol. of the *Hiſtory of Hindoſtan* by *Alexander Dow, Eſq.*

'anceſtors; who, in the age of Moſes or Mahomet, dwelt 'under ſimilar tents, and conducted their horſes, and 'camels, and ſheep, to the ſame ſprings and the ſame paſ-'tures[41].'

'The vaſt deſerts,' ſays Volney, 'which extend from 'the confines of Perſia to Morocco,' are inhabited by the Bedoweens. 'Though divided into independent 'communities, or tribes, not unfrequently hoſtile to 'each other, they may ſtill be conſidered as forming one 'nation. The reſemblance of their language is a mani-'feſt token of this relationſhip. The only difference 'that exiſts between them is, that the African tribes are 'of a leſs ancient origin, being poſterior to the conqueſt 'of theſe countries by the Califs, or ſucceſſors of Ma-'homet; while the tribes of the deſert of Arabia, pro-'perly ſo called, have deſcended by an uninterrupted 'ſucceſſion from the remoteſt ages; and it is of theſe I 'mean more eſpecially to treat.—To theſe the orientals 'are accuſtomed to *appropriate* the name of Arabs, as 'being the moſt ancient and the pureſt race. The term '*Bedaoui* is added as a ſynonimous expreſſion, ſignify-'ing, as I have obſerved, inhabitant of the Deſert; and 'this term has the greater propriety, as the word *Arab*, 'in the ancient language of theſe countries, ſignifies a 'ſolitude or deſert.' The Arabs of the deſert, 'we may 'aſſert, have, *in every reſpect*, retained their primitive 'independence and ſimplicity. *Every thing* that ancient 'hiſtory has related of their cuſtoms, manners, language, 'and even their prejudices, is almoſt minutely true of 'them to this day; and if we conſider, beſides, that this 'unity of character, preſerved through ſuch a number 'of ages, ſtill ſubſiſts, even in the moſt diſtant ſituations, 'that is, that the tribes moſt remote from each other

[41] Vol. IX. p. 224.

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'preſerve an exact reſemblance, it muſt be allowed, that 'the circumſtances, which accompany ſo peculiar a 'moral ſtate, are a ſubject of moſt curious enquiry[42].'

Of the deſcendants of the Bedoweens, who inhabit Egypt, ſome, ſays Volney, 'diſperſed in families, inha- 'bit the rocks, caverns, ruins, and ſequeſtered places 'where there is water; others, united in tribes, encamp 'under low and ſmoky tents, and paſs their lives in per- 'petual journeyings, ſometimes in the deſert, ſometimes 'on the banks of the river; having no other attachment 'to the ſoil than what ariſes from their own ſafety, or the 'ſubſiſtence of their flocks. There are tribes of them, who 'arrive every year after the inundation, from the heart 'of Africa, to profit by the fertility of the country, and 'who in the ſpring retire into the depths of the deſert; 'others are ſtationary in Egypt, where they farm lands, 'which they ſow, and annually change. All of them ob- 'ſerve among themſelves ſtated limits, which they never 'paſs, on pain of war. They all lead nearly the ſame 'kind of life, and have the ſame manners and cuſtoms. 'Ignorant and poor, the Bedoweens preſerve an original 'character diſtinct from ſurrounding nations. Pacific in 'their camp, they are every where elſe in an habitual 'ſtate of war. The huſbandmen, whom they pillage, 'hate them; the travellers, whom they deſpoil, ſpeak ill 'of them; and the Turks, who dread them, endeavour to 'divide and corrupt them. It is calculated, that the dif- 'ferent tribes of them in Egypt might form a body of '30,000 horſemen; but theſe are ſo diſperſed and diſ- 'united, that they are only conſidered as robbers and 'vagabonds[43].'

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[42] Vol. I. p. 379, 380.

[43] Vol. I. p. 76. The following fact I borrow from another celebrated French infidel. The province of Anoſſi, in the iſland of Madagaſcar, is divided into a conſiderable number of governments, and theſe governments are all ſubject to the deſcendants of Arabs. 'Theſe petty ſovereigns

The ſtriking reſemblance of the Arabs to their remote progenitors has a ſtrong claim to attention, as well becauſe it is a fact unuſual in the nations of the world, as on account of ſome peculiar circumſtances, which have occurred in the hiſtory of this ſingular people. It cannot be ſaid of the inhabitants of Arabia, that they have had ſcarcely any intercourſe with mankind, It cannot be ſaid, that they have diſcovered themſelves to be deſtitute of genius and incapable of improvement; or, that they have had no opportunity of introducing into their country a new ſyſtem of arts, of manners, and of opinion. It has been far otherwiſe. The Arabs or Saracens have been diſtinguiſhed for their attainments in literature and their exploits in war. Animated by courage and by enthuſiaſm, they carried their victorious arms into moſt of the civilized nations of the world, and erected one of the moſt powerful empires, which the world has ever ſeen. Yet, ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'the liberty of the Saracens ſurvived 'their conqueſts. The firſt caliphs indulged the bold and 'familiar language of their ſubjects: they aſcended the 'pulpit to perſuade and edify the congregation: nor was 'it *before the ſeat of empire was removed to the Tigris*, 'that the Abbaſſides adopted the proud and pompous ce-'remonial of the Perſian and Byzantine courts[44].'

The ſame determined enemy of prophecy and of Chriſtianity, after alluding to the prediction which I have endeavoured to illuſtrate, and obſerving that *ſome parts* of Arabia have been ſubdued, a fact which needs not and ought not to be diſputed, admits that 'theſe exceptions 'are temporary or local.' 'The body of the nation,' he acknowledges, '*has* eſcaped the yoke of the moſt power-

'are continually at war with each other, but never fail to unite againſt the 'other princes of Madagaſcar.' The Abbe Raynal's Hiſt. of the Settlements in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, vol. II. p. 11.

44 Vol. IX, p. 236.

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'ful monarchies: the arms of Seſoſtris and Cyrus, of 'Pompey and Trajan, could never atchieve the conqueſt 'of Arabia; the preſent ſovereign of the Turks may ex- 'erciſe a ſhadow of juriſdiction, but his pride is reduced 'to ſolicit the friendſhip of a people, whom it is danger- 'ous to provoke, and *fruitleſs to attack*[45].'

That Arabia, a country, as Mr. Gibbon obſerves, 'encompaſſed by the moſt civilized nations of the ancient 'world[46],' ſhould never have adopted foreign manners, nor have been ſubdued by a foreign power, as the prophecy leads us to expect, is ſurely an extraordinary fact; and which no human foreſight could predict. But although we ſhould not be authorized in denying, that any natural cauſes exiſt, which have operated in a manner highly favourable to the independence of the Arabs; it may at the ſame time be remarked, that if the Deity foreſaw, that their independence would upon the whole promote thoſe ſchemes of benevolence, and thoſe meaſures of government, which are beſt ſuited to this lower world, and this ſtate of imperfection and diſcipline, and if he thought fit to predict that independence; it is by no means unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that, in order to prevent the ſubjugation of Arabia, he would, were the intervention neceſſary, arreſt the arm of conqueſt, and baffle the beſt concerted ſchemes of policy.

The prediction relative to the Arabs, recorded in Geneſis, plainly intimates the preſervation of national independence. The prophecy on the fate of the neighbouring country of Egypt, which I am next to illuſtrate, announces a very different event. *Egypt*, ſays Ezekiel in ch. xxix[47], ſhall be *a baſe kingdom. It ſhall be the baſeſt of the kingdoms; neither ſhall it exalt itſelf any*

[45] Gibbon, vol. IX. p. 230. [46] Vol. IX. p. 239.
[47] V. 14, 15.

*more above the nations: for I will diminiſh them, that they ſhall no more rule over the nations.* And again in the following chapter, I will *ſell the land into the hands of the wicked: and I will make the land waſte, and all that is therein, by the hand of ſtrangers;—and there ſhall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt*[48]. The language of the prediction is not dark and doubtful, but peremptory and explicit. To hiſtory, therefore, and not to verbal criticiſm, it is neceſſary to recur for its illuſtration.

This remarkable prophecy, according to Prideaux, was pronounced by Ezekiel in the year 587 B. C[49]. It was in a great degree fulfilled in the year 571, when Egypt, at that time torn by inteſtine diviſion and civil war, was invaded by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and it approached ſtill nearer to its complete accompliſhment in the year 525, when the Egyptians were ſubdued by the arms of Cambyſes, the ſon of Cyrus. But there is reaſon to think, that it was not intended to receive its perfect completion antecedently to the year 350[50], when Egypt was completely reduced by Ochus into a province of the Perſian empire.

From this year to the preſent time, 2144 years have elapſed; and certainly it is not a little extraordinary, that, notwithſtanding the great length of this period, and the numerous revolutions which in the courſe of it have been accompliſhed in Egypt, not a ſingle prince of Egyptian origin has ever been raiſed, even for a ſhort interval, to

[48] V. 12, 13.

[49] *Connect. of the Old and New Teſt.* vol. I. fol. p. 67. According to the chronology of Blair, Ezekiel commenced his prophetic office in the year 593, B. C: according to Prideaux in the year 594.

[50] Theſe three dates are taken from the chronological tables of Blair and archbiſhop Uſher, who are in agreement with Prideaux, excepting that he places the invaſion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar two years earlier.

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the throne of the country. It ſurely was not to have been expected, that, amidſt a crowd of political changes, and the greateſt reverſes of fortune, the natives of the country ſhould never once have had the good fortune to ſucceed in eſtabliſhing even a tranſient independence. Satisfactorily to account for the exiſtence of this prophecy, and its correſponding fulfilment, on the ſuppoſition that it is a ſally of enthuſiaſm, or an invention of impoſture, is not a taſk of very eaſy accompliſhment.

At the promulgation of this prophecy, Egypt had been governed, with little interruption, by its native princes; and the general tenor of the Egyptian annals evinced, that, in point of fertility, populouſneſs, and power[51], it deſerved to be ranked among the moſt favoured as well as independent nations. Nature alſo had ſeparated it from every other country; and it was by no means peculiarly expoſed to inſult and attack. On the contrary, its geographical boundaries, no leſs than its paſt hiſtory, ſeemed to promiſe a long continuance of national proſperity. Such was its ſituation that it was more than uſually ſheltered from invaſion, and ſeemed naturally deſigned to conſtitute a great and independent nation. On no ſide was Egypt touched by any powerful empire. Being, indeed, ſurrounded by the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and the deſerts of Africa[52], unlike other countries, it had ſcarcely

[51] 'As Egypt,' ſays Mr. Bryant, 'was one of the moſt ancient, ſo was 'it one of the moſt extenſive kingdoms, that for many ages ſubſiſted in 'the world.—Egypt ſeems to have been reſpectable from the beginning; 'and the moſt early accounts, that we can arrive at, bear witneſs of its emi-'nence and power.' And he mentions a number of circumſtances, which, he ſays, 'muſt raiſe in us a high idea of the affluence and power which this 'knowing people were poſſeſſed of.' *Obſervations upon the Ancient Hiſtory of the Egyptians*, 4to, 1767, p. 101.

[52] 'That impervious country' is the expreſſion by which Mr Gibbon characterizes Egypt (vol. VIII. p. 222); and ſpeaking of the difficulties which

ſcarcely any reaſon to guard againſt the approach of danger, excepting from a ſingle point, namely from the iſthmus of Suez, which joins Africa to Aſia, and reaches from the Red Sea to the moſt Eaſtern mouth of the Nile[53]. Egypt alſo, though no where of any great breadth, was

the forces of the caliph Omar had to ſurmount in its conqueſt, he elſewhere ſays, 'the cities of Egypt were many and populous; their architecture was 'ſtrong and ſolid;' and the Nile, with its numerous branches, was alone an 'inſuperable barrier' (vol. IX. p. 428.).

After writing the obſervations in the text, I met with the following remarks of Bochart. Egypt was anciently called *the land of Mizraim*; and this word is the dual of *mâſor*, which ſignifies *a fortified place*. 'Nor,' ſays Bochart, 'is there any region more ſecure from its natural ſituation.' "From "the fortified nature of the country it appears," ſays Diodorus, "greatly "to ſurpaſs thoſe tracts of territory which are marked out for ſovereignty." 'And in what follows he proves this by a long induction of particulars. 'Namely, on the weſt, it has an inacceſſible deſert; on the ſouth, the cataracts 'of the Nile and the mountains of Æthiopia; on the eaſt, alſo a deſert, 'and the Serbonian bog, and ſinking ſands; toward the north, a ſea almoſt 'deſtitute of any port: for from Joppa in Phœnicia even unto Parætonium 'in Lybia there is no port excepting Pharos. After Diodorus had ſtated 'theſe circumſtances at large, he thus concludes: "Egypt then is on all "ſides fenced in by natural fortifications." Of theſe things he treats in 'the iſt book. And, in the xvth, ſpeaking of Nectanebis, king of Egypt, 'at the time the Perſians were approaching, he ſays, "but he moſt of all "confided in the fortified nature of the country, ſince Egypt is on all ſides "difficult of acceſs." Thus alſo Strabo, in his xvith book. "Even from "the beginning Egypt was extremely tranquil, becauſe it had every thing "it wanted within itſelf, and it was difficult of acceſs to foreigners." And 'this he afterwards demonſtrates by the ſame arguments by which Diodo-'rus had proved it.' *Phaleg.* lib. iv. cap. 24. Both Strabo and Diodorus Siculus had travelled into Egypt. Not very different is the ſtatement of a modern traveller, though comprized in fewer words. 'Egypt,' ſays Volney, 'is protected from a foreign enemy, on the land-ſide, by her deſerts, 'and on that of the ſea, by her dangerous coaſt.' Travels, vol. II. p. 363.

[53] Peluſium, which ſtood at the entrance into Egypt, and at one extremity of the iſthmus of Suez, was ſituated, ſays Mr. Bryant, upon the extremity of Arabia; 'from whence extended a vaſt deſert, not fit for the 'march or encampment of an army,' but which is deſtitute of water, and greatly infeſted by venomous reptiles. Strabo, 'mentioning the ſame part

'of

was notwithſtanding a country of very reſpectable ſize. Its whole extent 'from north to ſouth was,' ſays Mr. Bryant, 'computed to be about 600 miles[54].'

Knowledge, it has been obſerved, is power; and therefore the diſciplined armies of civilized and enlightened nations, though comparatively inconſiderable in point of number, have often conquered countries of great extent, when inhabited by a people involved in barbariſm. But it can never be urged, that Egypt was likely to be ſubdued on account of its marked inferiority to other countries in knowledge, or the diſcoveries of ſcience, in maxims of policy and government, or the practice of the uſeful arts. Egypt, on the contrary, was greatly celebrated for its wiſdom[55]; and there was ſcarcely any part of it, which did

'of Arabia from the Nile to the Red Sea, repreſents it as a ſandy waſte, 'that could ſcarcely be paſſed, except upon camels.—This deſert, which 'began at Peluſium and the Nile, reached in the way to Paleſtine as far as 'Gaza, which was ſituated on the edge of it.' Obſ. on the Anc. Hiſt. of 'Egypt, p. 76—80.

[54] Obſ. on the Anc. Hiſt. of Egypt, p. 105.

[55] The Egyptians, ſays Mr. Bryant, 'were eſteemed a very wiſe and 'learned people; ſo that Moſes is ſaid to have been *learned in all the wiſdom 'of the Egyptians.*' Acts vii. 22. *Obſ. on the Anc. Hiſt. of Egypt*, p. 101. 'Egypt,' ſays Rollin, 'was ever conſidered by all the ancients as the moſt 'renowned ſchool for wiſdom and politics, and the ſource from whence 'moſt arts and ſciences were derived. This kingdom beſtowed its no-'bleſt labours and fineſt arts on the improving mankind; and Greece was 'ſo ſenſible of this, that its moſt illuſtrious men, as Homer, Pythagoras, 'Plato, even its great legiſlators, Lycurgus and Solon, with many more 'whom it is needleſs to mention, travelled into Egypt to complete their 'ſtudies, and draw from that fountain whatever was moſt rare and valuable 'in every kind of learning.—The Egyptians were the firſt people who 'rightly underſtood the rules of government. A nation ſo grave and ſe-'rious immediately perceived, that the true end of politics is to make life 'eaſy, and a people happy. The kingdom was hereditary; but, accord-'ing to Diodorus, the Egyptian princes conducted themſelves in a different 'manner from what is uſually ſeen in other monarchies, where the prince 'acknowledges no other rule of his actions, but his arbitrary will and plea-'ſure.

did not bear an unequivocal teſtimony to the ſkilful induſtry of its inhabitants, and which did not contain ſome work, diſtinguiſhed by its utility, or the difficulty of its accompliſhment.

But though Egypt could not be invaded but with difficulty, and with hazard; it will perhaps be urged, that its climate is unwholeſome and extremely enervating; that its natives are naturally puſillanimous[56] and neceſſarily effeminate; and therefore that it is little wonderful, that a people of ſuch a character, and ſuch a climate, ſhould have ſucceſſively fallen a prey to every invader. But ideas of this kind, however prevalent they may have been, have not truth for their foundation.

'ſure. But, here, kings were under greater reſtraint from the laws than 'their ſubjects.' They 'freely permitted, not only the quality and pro-'portion of their eatables and liquids to be preſcribed them (a thing 'cuſtomary in Egypt, the inhabitants of which were all ſober, and whoſe 'air inſpired frugality), but even that all their hours, and almoſt every ac-'tion, ſhould be under the regulation of the laws.—Thirty judges were 'ſelected out of the principal cities to form a body or aſſembly for judg-'ing the whole kingdom. The prince, in filling theſe vacancies, choſe 'ſuch as were moſt renowned for their honeſty; and put at their head him 'who was moſt diſtinguiſhed for his knowledge and love of the laws.— 'Honourably ſubſiſted by the generoſity of the prince, they adminiſtered 'juſtice gratuitouſly to the people.' But 'the moſt excellent circumſtance 'in the laws of the Egyptians was, that every individual, from his in-'fancy, was nurtured in the ſtricteſt obſervance of them.—The virtue in 'the higheſt eſteem among the Egyptians was gratitude. The glory, 'which has been given them of being the moſt grateful of all men, ſhews, 'that they were the beſt formed of any nation for ſocial life.' Anc. Hiſt. vol. I. 12mo. p. 22—27. This account of Rollin, it muſt be acknowledged, is too favourably drawn. At the ſame time it muſt be admitted, that much which is recorded to their praiſe is here omitted; and that enough will remain, after a fair ſubtraction of what is exaggerated, to entitle the Egyptians to be honourably diſtinguiſhed above almoſt every other nation of early antiquity. In proof of this, let the whole of the ſecond book of Herodotus be peruſed.

[56] That the Egyptians are 'naturally a cowardly people' is one of the ſtatements of bp. Newton, vol. II. p. 367.

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The climate of Egypt is doubtleſs not without its inconveniences. But it by no means deſerves to be called unhealthy. 'The Egyptians,' ſays Herodotus, 'after 'the Lybians are the moſt healthy of all men[57].' That 'Egypt is an earthly paradiſe,' is the ſtatement of Thevenot[58], who viſited that country in the year 1657; and another Frenchman, the conſul Maillet, who reſided 20 years at Cairo, ſpeaks of its climate in the moſt extravagant terms of commendation. 'It is of this country, which 'ſeems to have been regarded by nature with a favourable 'eye, that the Gods have made a ſort of terreſtrial paradiſe. 'The air there is more pure and excellent than in any 'other part of the world. This goodneſs of the air com-'municates itſelf to all things, living or inanimate, which 'are placed in this fortunate region. As the men com-'monly enjoy there perfect health, the trees and plants 'never loſe their verdure[59].' To the 'fertility and rich-'neſs of the productions of Egypt muſt,' ſays the Baron de Tott, 'be added a moſt ſalubrious air. We ſhall be 'more particularly ſtruck with this advantage, when we 'conſider that Roſetta, Damietta, and Manſoora, which 'are encompaſſed with rice-grounds, are much celebrat-'ed for the healthineſs of their neighbourhood; and that 'Egypt is, perhaps, the only country in the world where 'this kind of culture, which requires ſtagnant waters, is 'not unwholeſome.—The reſearches I have carefully 'made concerning the plague, which I once believed to 'originate in Egypt, have convinced me, that it would 'not be ſo much as known there, were not the ſeeds of 'it conveyed thither by the commercial intercourſe be-'tween Conſtantinople and Alexandria. It is in this

[57] Lib. ii. cap. 77.

[58] Livre Second de la Premiere Partie du Voyage de M. de Thevenot au Levant, Paris, 1689. P. 790.

[59] Deſcription of Egypt, Let. I. p. 14.

'laſt

'laſt city that it always begins to appear; it but rarely 'reaches Cairo, though no precaution is taken to prevent 'it; and when it does, it is preſently extirpated by the 'heats, and prevented from arriving as far as the Saide. 'It is likewiſe well known, that the penetrating dews, 'which fall in Egypt about midſummer, deſtroy, even in 'Alexandria, all remains of this diſtemper[60].' Of the general healthineſs of the climate Savary alſo ſpeaks in high terms.

'The climate' of Egypt, ſays Volney, 'is by no 'means unhealthy. The Mamalukes are a proof of this, 'who, from wholeſome diet, and a proper regimen, en-'joy the moſt robuſt ſtate of health.—We deceive our-'ſelves when we repreſent' the Egyptians 'as enervated 'by heat, or effeminate from debauchery. The inhabitants 'of the cities, and men of opulence, may indeed be a 'prey to that effeminacy which is common to them in 'every climate; but the poor deſpiſed peaſants, denomi-'nated *fellahs*, ſupport aſtoniſhing fatigues. I have ſeen 'them paſs whole days in drawing water from the Nile, 'expoſed naked to a ſun which would kill us. Thoſe who 'are valets to the Mamalukes continually follow their 'maſters. In town, or in the country, and amid all the 'dangers of war, they accompany them every where, 'and always on foot; they will run before or after their 'horſes for days together, and when they are fatigued, 'tie themſelves to their tails rather than be left behind. 'The character of their minds is every way correſpon-'dent to the hardineſs of their bodies. The implacability 'diſplayed by theſe peaſants in their hatreds, and their 'revenges; their obſtinacy in the battles which fre-'quently happen between different villages; their ſenſe 'of honour in ſuffering the baſtinado, without diſcover-

[60] Memoirs of the Baron de Tott, part iv. p. 69.

'ing

'ing a ſecret: and even the barbarity with which they 'puniſh the ſlighteſt deviation from chaſtity in their 'wives and daughters, all prove that their minds, when 'ſwayed by certain prejudices, are capable of great ener- 'gy, and that that energy only wants a proper direction, 'to become a formidable courage. The cruelties and 'ſeditions which have ſometimes been the conſequence of 'their exhauſted patience, eſpecially in the province of 'Sharkia, indicate a latent fire, which waits only for pro- 'per agents to put it in motion, and produce great and 'unexpected effects[61].'

Bp. Newton, after giving a conciſe account of the Egyptian hiſtory, ſays, 'by this deduction it appears, 'that the truth of Ezekiel's prediction is fully atteſted by 'the whole ſeries of the hiſtory of Egypt from that time 'to the preſent. And who could pretend to ſay upon 'human conjecture, that ſo great a kingdom, ſo rich and 'fertile a country, ſhould ever afterwards become tribu- 'tary and ſubject to *ſtrangers?* It is now a great deal 'above two thouſand years, ſince this prophecy was firſt 'delivered; and what likelihood or appearance was there, 'that the Egyptians ſhould for ſo many ages bow under 'a foreign yoke, and never in all that time be able to 'recover their liberties, and have a prince of their own 'to reign over them? But as is the prophecy, ſo is the 'event. For not long afterwards Egypt was conquered by 'the Babylonians, and after the Babylonians by the Per- 'ſians; and after the Perſians it became ſubject to the 'Macedonians, and after the Macedonians to the Ro- 'mans, and after the Romans to the Saracens, and then 'to the Mamalukes; and it is now a province of the Tur- 'kiſh empire.'

With reſpect to the degraded ſtate of Egypt, the

[61] Vol. I. p. 202, 246.

language

language of an intelligent infidel is perfectly similar. Egypt, says Volney, 'deprived three-and-twenty centu-'ries ago of her natural proprietors, has seen her fertile 'fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedo-'nians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Geor-'gians, and, at length, the race of Tartars, distinguished 'by the name of Ottoman Turks[62].'

Ezekiel says of the Egyptians, in the name of the Supreme Being, *I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations*; and accordingly they are extremely diminished in point of number. Herodotus, who travelled into Egypt about a hundred years after the death of Amasis, relates, that, in the reign of that prince, there were 20,000 cities in Egypt[63]. Though this account is greatly exaggerated, yet it cannot be doubted, that ancient Egypt was extremely populous. When a province of the Roman empire, 'the inhabitants of Egypt, 'exclusive of Alexandria, amounted,' says Mr. Gib-'bon[64], 'to seven millions and a half (Joseph. de Bell. 'Jud. II. 16.).' On the present population of Egypt I cite the calculation of Volney. 'As it is known, that 'the number of towns and villages does not exceed '2300, and the number of inhabitants in each of them, 'one with another, including Cairo itself, is not more 'than a thousand, the total cannot be more than '2,300,000[65].'

The prophet moreover says, *I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked; and I will make the land waste,*

[62] Vol. I. p. 74.

[63] Lib. ii. cap. 177. Perhaps the word πολεις, which in this passage is generally translated *cities*, had better be rendered *towns*.

[64] Vol. I. p. 81. Alexandria, according to Diodorus Siculus, contained 300,000 *free* inhabitants. Lib. xvii. Its slaves, Mr. Hume is inclined to think, might be estimated at an equal number. Ess. on the Popul. of Anc. Nat.

[65] Travels, vol. I. p. 238.

*and*

*and all that is therein, by the hand of ſtrangers*; and Egypt *ſhall be the baſeſt of the kingdoms*. Numerous as are the centuries which have elapſed ſince the publication of this prophecy, yet to deſcribe the condition of Egypt at this very time, with equal brevity and ſuperior accuracy, would ſcarcely be poſſible. Egypt, for centuries, has been governed not only by *ſtrangers*, but by *ſlaves*; for it is now nearly 550 years ſince this country, to uſe an expreſſion of Mr. Gibbon, firſt groaned under 'the iron 'ſceptre of the Mamalukes,' and, during the whole of this period, the Mamalukes have continued to oppreſs its unfortunate inhabitants.

In order to ſhew, that Egypt is emphatically *the baſeſt of kingdoms*, and to explain the ſingular fact of a fine country having ſo long been ſubject to the government of *ſlaves*, it will be neceſſary to introduce a ſhort account of the Mamalukes. It is taken from Volney. Twelve thouſand of them, being young ſlaves from Circaſſia and the adjoining parts of Aſia, were firſt introduced by the Sultan of Egypt into that country about the year 1230. Early trained to military exerciſes, they ſhortly became a body of the braveſt, the moſt handſome, and at the ſame time the moſt mutinous troops of Aſia; and in the year 1250, riſing in rebellion, they put to death the reigning Sultan, and in his place ſubſtituted one of their own chiefs. They continued *ſole* maſters of the country and government which they had uſurped till the year 1517[66], when the Turkiſh emperor Selim defeated them, and annexed this new conqueſt to the Ottoman empire. But although he limited, he did not deſtroy, the power of

[66] Of the oppreſſions and prodigality of the Mamalukes, antecedently to the year 1517, ſome idea may be formed from ſome facts related in the Travels of M. Baumgarten, a German nobleman, who viſited Egypt in the year 1507. See Churchill's Coll. of Voyages, 1752, vol. I. p. 328—332, 339, 345.

the

the Mamalukes. From this foreign ſoldiery the twenty-four governors, or beys, of provinces, were regularly choſen; and 'to them,' ſays Volney, 'was entruſted 'the care of reſtraining the Arabs, ſuperintending the 'collection of the tributes, and the whole civil govern-'ment of the country.' The orders of the Turkiſh divan, which was eſtabliſhed in Egypt, they were, however, implicitly to obey. 'But, for the laſt 50 years, 'the Porte, having relaxed from its vigilance, innova-'tions have taken place: the Mamalukes have increaſed, 'become maſters of all the riches and ſtrength of the 'country, and in ſhort, gained ſuch an aſcendancy over 'the Ottomans, that the power of the latter is reduced 'almoſt to nothing. On ſeeing them ſubſiſting in this 'country for ſeveral centuries, we ſhould be led to im-'agine their race is preſerved by the ordinary means; 'but if their firſt eſtabliſhment was a ſingular event, their 'continuance is not leſs extraordinary. During 550 'years that there have been Mamalukes in Egypt, not 'one of them has left ſubſiſting iſſue; there does not 'exiſt one ſingle family of them in the ſecond generation; 'all their children periſh in the firſt or ſecond deſcent. 'Almoſt the ſame thing happens to the Turks; and it is 'obſerved, that *they* can only ſecure the continuance of 'their families, by marrying women who are natives, 'which the Mamalukes have always diſdained[67]. The 'means, therefore, by which they are perpetuated and 'multiplied, are the ſame by which they were firſt eſta-'bliſhed; that is to ſay, when they die, they are replaced 'by ſlaves brought from their original country. From 'the time of the Moguls, this commerce has been con-'tinued on the confines of the Cuban and the Phaſis, in 'the ſame manner as it is carried on in Africa, by the wars

[67] 'The wives of the Mamalukes' ſays Volney, 'are, like them, ſlaves 'brought from Georgia, Mingrelia,' &c.

'among

'among the numerous tribes, and by the miſery of the in-
'habitants, who ſell their own children for a ſubſiſtence.
'The young peaſant, ſold in Mingrelia or Georgia,
'no ſooner arrives in Egypt, than his ideas undergo a
'total alteration. Though now a ſlave, he ſeems deſtin-
'ed to become a maſter, and already aſſumes the ſpirit of
'his future condition.—As in ſuch ſtates money is the
'only motive, the chief attention of the maſter is to ſatis-
'fy the avidity of his ſervants, in order to ſecure their
'attachment. Hence, that prodigality of the Beys, ſo
'ruinous to Egypt, which they pillage; that want of
'ſubordination in the Mamalukes, ſo fatal to the chiefs
'whom they deſpoil.' And 'no ſooner is a ſlave en-
'franchiſed, than he aſpires to the principal employ-
'ments[68].'

Profligate and unprincipled as were many of the Ptolemies and the Cæſars, their rule was wiſe and beneficent in compariſon of that of the Mamalukes. *The land* of Egypt, *and all that is therein*, it is foretold, *will* be *made waſte by the hand of ſtrangers*. That this prediction is at preſent fulfilling with the utmoſt exactneſs, the following facts, as related by Volney, one of the moſt recent as well as moſt judicious travellers into that country, will be ſufficient to evince.

The houſes, the canals, the ports, and a large part of the cultivated lands, have been ſuffered to fall into ruin or decay. A few *particulars* will illuſtrate this aſſertion. In the neighbourhood of modern Alexandria, 'the earth
'is *covered* with the remains of lofty buildings deſtroyed;
'whole fronts crumbled down, roofs fallen in, battlements
'decayed, and the ſtones corroded and diſfigured by
'ſaltpetre. The traveller paſſes over a vaſt plain ſur-
'rounded with trenches, pierced with wells, divided by

[68] Volney, vol. I. p. 101—113, 181. See alſo Gibbon, vol. XI. p. 164.

'walls in ruins, covered over with ancient columns and 'modern tombs, amid palm-trees and nopals, and where 'no living creature is to be met with, but owls, bats, 'and jackalls.' The environs of Grand Cairo 'are full 'of hills of duſt, formed by the rubbiſh, which is ac-'cumulating every day.' The whole of the deſert to the ſouth of Roſetta, 'formerly interſected by large ca-'nals, and filled with towns, preſents nothing but hillocks 'of a yellowiſh ſand, very fine, which the wind heaps up 'at the foot of every obſtacle, and which frequently 'buries the palm-trees.' What is called the New Port at Alexandria, 'the only harbour for the Europeans, is 'clogged up with ſand,' in conſequence of which ſhips are frequently loſt. 'It will perhaps be aſked, in Eu-'rope, why do they not repair the New Port? The an-'ſwer is, that in Turkey, they deſtroy every thing and 'repair nothing.' The Old Port, into which none but the ſhips of Mahometans are admitted, will be deſtroyed alſo, 'as the ballaſt of veſſels has been continually thrown 'into it for the laſt two hundred years. The ſpirit of the 'Turkiſh government is to ruin the labours of paſt ages, 'and deſtroy the hopes of future times, becauſe the bar-'barity of ignorant deſpotiſm never conſiders to-mor-'row[69].'

'Every year,' ſays Savary, 'the limits of cultivated 'Egypt are encroached upon, and barren ſands accumu-'late from all parts. In 1517, the æra of the Turkiſh 'conqueſt, lake Mareotis was at no diſtance from the 'walls of Alexandria, and the canal which conveyed the 'waters into that city was ſtill navigable. At this day 'the lake has diſappeared; and the lands it watered, and 'which, according to hiſtorians, produced abundance of 'corn, wine, and various fruits, are changed into deſerts,

[69] Volney, vol. I. p. 5, 7, 31, 234.

'where

'where the ſorrowful traveller finds neither ſhrub, nor 'plant, nor verdure. The canal itſelf, the work of Al-'exander, neceſſary even to the ſubſiſtence of the inha-'bitants of the city he built, is nearly choaked up. It 'only receives the waters, when the inundation is at its 'higheſt point, and preſerves them but for a ſhort ſpace 'of time.—The Peluſiac branch, which diſcharged itſelf 'into the eaſtern part of the lake of Tanis or Menzale, is 'totally deſtroyed. With it periſhed the beautiful pro-'vince it fertilized[70].'

But in order to convey a tolerably adequate idea of the complete debaſement of Egypt, and the extreme wretched-neſs of its inhabitants, it will be neceſſary that ſome other particulars ſhould be ſpecified. 'The greater part of the 'lands are,' ſays Volney, 'in the hands of the Beys, the 'Mamalukes, and the profeſſors of the law; the number 'of the other proprietors is extremely ſmall, and their 'property liable to a thouſand impoſitions. The pea-'ſants are hired labourers, to whom no more is left than 'barely ſuffices to ſuſtain life. The rice and corn they 'gather are carried to the table of their maſters, and no-'thing is reſerved for them but *dourra* or Indian Millet, 'of which they make a bread without leaven.' This bread, 'is, with water and raw onions, their only food 'throughout the year; and they eſteem themſelves happy, 'if they can ſometimes procure a little honey, cheeſe, 'ſour milk, and dates.—Their habitations are mud-walled 'huts, in which they are ſuffocated with heat and ſmoke, 'and frequently attacked by maladies ariſing from un-'cleanneſs, humidity, and unwholeſome food; and, to 'fill the meaſure of their wretchedneſs, to theſe phyſical 'evils are added continual alarms, the dread of the rob-'beries of the Arabs, and the extortions of the Mama-

[70] Savary's Letters on Egypt. vol. II. p. 230.

'lukes, family feuds, and all the anxieties of a perpetual 'civil war. This is a juſt picture of all the villages, and 'equally reſembles the towns. At Cairo itſelf, the 'ſtranger, on his arrival, is ſtruck with the univerſal ap-'pearance of wretchedneſs and miſery. The crowds, 'which throng the ſtreets, preſent to his ſight nothing 'but hideous rags and diſguſting nudities. It is true, he 'often meets with horſemen richly clad; but this diſplay 'of luxury only renders the contraſt of indigence the 'more ſhocking. Every thing he ſees or hears reminds 'him he is in the country of ſlavery and tyranny.—There 'is no ſecurity for life or property. The blood of men is 'ſhed like that of the vileſt animals.—The officer of the 'night in his rounds, and the officer of the day in his 'circuit, judge, condemn, and execute[71] in the twinkling 'of an eye, without appeal. Executioners attend them, 'and, on the firſt ſignal, the head of the unhappy victim 'falls into the leathern bag, in which it is received for 'fear of ſoiling the place.' In the year 1784 Egypt was afflicted by famine; and 'the ſtreets and public places 'ſwarmed with meagre and dying ſkeletons, whoſe faul-'tering voices implored, in vain, the pity of paſſengers.— 'Theſe wretches expired, leaning againſt the houſes of 'the Beys, which they knew were ſtored with rice and 'corn, and, not unfrequently, the Mamalukes, importuned 'by their cries, chaſed them away with blows. Every 'diſguſting means of appeaſing the rage of hunger was 'tried, every thing the moſt filthy devoured; nor, ſhall 'I ever forget, that, when I was returning from Syria to 'France, in March 1785, I ſaw under the walls of an-

[71] Sir Henry Blount, who travelled into Egypt and the Levant in the year 1634 and 1635, obſerves, that in Egypt executions are more frequent, and attended with more circumſtances of barbarity, than in any other part of Turkey. *Earl of Oxford's Coll. of Voyages*, 1745, fol. vol. I. p. 529.

'cient

'cient Alexandria, two wretches ſitting on the dead car-
'caſe of a camel, and diſputing its putrid fragments with
'the dogs[72].'

Nor are there any circumſtances, which promiſe the degenerate and degraded natives of Egypt, that the yoke which preſſes ſo heavily upon them ſhall be ſhaken off: from no quarter ariſes a probability of independence, which might diſſipate that thick gloom which at preſent envelopes all their proſpects, which might enlarge the ſcanty horizon of their hopes, or even ſhed upon their ſorrows a feeble and fluctuating ray of conſolation. In Egypt it is not in any particular family, but in a large body of men, that power is hereditary. Accordingly the military tyranny of the Mamalukes does not betray thoſe ſymptoms of degeneracy and growing feebleneſs, which the Aſiatic governments almoſt uniformly preſent. By their valour and perſonal expertneſs the Mamalukes are ſtill diſtinguiſhed. To deſtroy or to reform them, 'a general 'league of the peaſantry is,' ſays Volney, 'neceſſary; and 'this it is impoſſible to form. The ſyſtem of oppreſſion is 'methodical.—Each province, each diſtrict, has its go-'vernor, and each village its lieutenant, who watches 'the motions of the multitude.—This lieutenant transfers 'a portion of his authority to ſome individuals of the ſo-'ciety he oppreſſes, and theſe become his ſupporters: 'jealous of each other, they ſtrive who ſhall beſt merit 'his favour, and he employs them alternately to effect 'their mutual deſtruction. The ſame jealouſies and in-'veterate hatreds pervade alſo and diſunite the villages. 'But even ſuppoſing an union which is ſo difficult to 'take place, what could a crowd of barefooted and almoſt 'naked peaſants, with only ſticks, or even with muſkets, 'effect againſt a body of diſciplined and well-armed ca-

[72] Volney, vol. I. p. 188—194.

'valry. I am, above all, led to believe Egypt can never 'ſhake off this yoke, when I conſider the nature of the 'country, which is but too advantageous for cavalry. If 'the beſt regulated infantry among us dread to encoun-'ter the horſe in a plain, how formidable muſt they be 'to a people, who are wholly ignorant of the very firſt 'elements of tactics, and who can never poſſibly acquire 'a knowledge, which can only be the reſult of an ex-'perience their ſituation denies them[73].'

But let it not be ſuppoſed, that I conjecture it to be a part of the plans of infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, that Egypt ſhould for ever remain the theatre of oppreſſion, wretchedneſs, and guilt. The deductions of reaſon, and the ſtudy of prophecy, lead to a very different concluſion: and the predictions, relative to Egypt and Arabia, the fulfilment of which I have endeavoured to illuſtrate, ought to be explained in conſiſtency with thoſe other prophecies, which foretell the future improved ſtate of mankind, and they are, I conceive, applicable only to the exiſting ſtate of the world; and are by no means intended to be fulfilled after the commencement of that happy æra, denominated the millennium.

The following obſervations conſtitute a principal part of the concluſion of bp. Newton's diſſertation on the prophecies relative to Egypt. After citing an unfavourable character of the Egyptians, he ſays, 'ſuch men are evi-'dently born not to command, but to ſerve and obey. 'They are altogether unworthy of liberty. Slavery is 'the fitteſt for them, as they are fitteſt for ſlavery.' I confeſs I admire not the ſpirit in which theſe remarks are written. The author of them forgot, that the vices of the Egyptians, which are a ſolid ground of regret, are the natural growth of the unfavourable ſituation in which

[73] Vol. I. p. 175, 176, 196—200.

they

they are placed. It is againſt the deteſted government of their country, the ſource of all their evils, that he ſhould have directed the plenitude of his indignation. The ſtatement of a modern infidel upon the ſubject is more rational than that of the Chriſtian prelate. But the ſentiments which the biſhop of Briſtol has here diſcovered, and thoſe which the genius of genuine Chriſtianity inſpires, are, I truſt, dictated by a far different ſpirit. 'If,' ſays Volney, 'we attentively examine the cauſes of the de-'baſement of the Egyptians, we ſhall find, that this peo-'ple, depreſſed by cruel circumſtances, are more deſerv-'ing of pity than contempt[74].'

Upon Egypt, as well as upon other countries, new and brighter ſcenes will aſſuredly dawn. The period, it may be expected, will at length arrive, when Egypt ſhall not only equal, but greatly ſurpaſs, the populouſneſs and proſperity of ancient times; and when the deſcendants of Iſhmael ſhall lay aſide the ferocity of their ancient manners, lead a more ſedentary and tranquil life, and cultivate the friendſhip of all the various tribes of mankind, who ſhall occaſionally viſit their country from motives of curioſity or commerce.

[74] Vol. I. p. 196.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

HAVING briefly treated on the ſixth vial, I now proceed to the ſeventh, which correſponds to the laſt period of the ſeventh trumpet. That the book of revelation compriſes many contemporaneous predictions,

none who are converſant in it need to be informed. Such perſons, therefore, will not be ſurpriſed, that an event of ſuch magnitude, or, I ſhould rather ſay, a ſeries of events of ſuch importance, as the fall of all antichriſtian dominion in Europe, ſhould be pointed out in more than one place and in a different manner. In the repreſentation of the laſt of the vials, St. John has interwoven the loftieſt figures of prophetic diction; and, as the ſublime is often deſtined to become obſcure, in any degree to penetrate their latent meaning would be ſcarcely poſſible, did we not receive important aid from parallel paſſages. It is partly on this account, that the conſideration of the ſeventh vial has been deferred to the preſent chapter.

It is in the concluſion of ch. xvi. immediately after the account of the defeat of the royal confederates at Armageddon[1], that the account of this vial occurs. *And the ſeventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple, ſaying, it is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, ſuch as was not ſince men were upon the earth, ſo mighty an earthquake, and ſo great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceneſs of his wrath. And every iſland fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every ſtone about the weight of a talent: and men blaſphemed God becauſe of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

The ſeventh vial, ſays bp. Newton, will 'complete

[1] 'Upon this great and laſt effort of the antichriſtian powers,' ſays Mr. Lowman, the ſeventh vial is poured out, 'full of the wrath of God.'

'the

'the ruin of the kingdom of the beaſt[2].' It points out, ſays Mr. Pyle, the total deſtruction of the antichriſtian empire. That the weight of it is to fall 'on all the antichriſtian powers,' is the obſervation of Mr. Lowman; and that 'the ſeventh vial contains in it the laſt ruin of 'the beaſt and his party,' is the declaration of Dr. Creſſener[3]. Since this, then, is the undoubted effect of the ſeventh vial, and it is elſewhere plainly foretold, that the ſuppreſſion of all the antichriſtian monarchies is introductory to the millenniary period; it ſeems probable, that the expreſſion *it is done*, ſignifies, that, with reſpect to theſe monarchies, and all ſpecies of eccleſiaſtical tyranny, it is finiſhed, it is concluded, and the ſentence againſt them is carried into execution.

'This vial is ſaid to be poured upon the air, the ſeat 'and region of ſounds, voices, thunders and lightnings, 'which are the emblems of the vaſt changes in the face 'of affairs now to be wrought. And the air, ſurrounding and comprehending the whole earth and ſea, denotes 'theſe changes to be total.' Thus far Mr. Pyle. But his obſervations, though not injudicious, are not perfectly ſatisfactory. Here then I recur to Vitringa. *The air*, he obſerves, ſignifies in this, as it frequently does in other places, *the heaven*; and accordingly the pouring of this vial upon the air, he declares, does without doubt allude to the darkening of the ſymbolic ſun, and moon, and ſtars. *There were thunders and lightnings.* As thunders agitate the heavens, ſo ſymbolic *thunders* are thoſe events which ſhake the political heavens or exiſting governments of the world, immediately previous to their fall; and ſays Daubuz, 'as *fire* ſignifies deſtruction, ſo

[2] Vol. III. p. 267. At the pouring out of this vial, 'the monarchies 'of this world,' ſays an early annotator, 'ſhall be broken and deſtroyed 'utterly.' Apoc. Myſt. By H. K. Part II. p. 35.

[3] *Judg. on the Rom. Ch.* p. 216.

'the

'the fire coming out of the *lightning*, implies the de-'ſtruction of God's enemies, that oppoſe his laws[4].' *And there was a great earthquake, ſuch as was not ſince men were upon the earth.* This revolution was not to be partial, was not to be confined to this or that country; but was at length to effect, in Europe at leaſt, a radical alteration in all the governments that were hitherto unreformed. It was to ſurpaſs, in extent and magnitude, all the changes which had ever been accompliſhed in the world.

*And the great city was divided into three parts.* *The great city* is the European part of the Roman empire; but what is ſignified by its diviſion into three diſtinct parts, the accompliſhment of the prophecy alone will explain[5]. *And the cities of the nations fell*[6]. They *fell away* from the different communions of corrupted religion, preparatory to their embracing of the religion of Jeſus, in its purity and ſimplicity, as taught by the great founder of it. *And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceneſs of his wrath.* This clauſe, which ſounds ſomewhat harſhly in our tranſlation, is thus rendered by Mr. Wakefield: *and Babylon the great was remembered before God,*

[4] P. 174.

[5] The following is the conjecture of an early interpreter: 'the *great city* 'was *divided into three parts*, ſome are hardened in their ignorance, and 'ſome are drawn out of it, and a third part will ſtand neuter between 'both, to ſee which way the balance will turn.' Cotton on the Vials, 1645, p. 153.

[6] Mr. Pyle, ſpeaking of this text, and the antichriſtian empire, ſays, 'the 'cities of the nations ſhall *fall off* from its intereſts;' and adds, it is to be taken 'in the ſame ſenſe as *the Tenth Part* is ſaid to have fallen, chap. xi. 13.' An annotator of the laſt century would thus interpret the words. 'By *the* 'cities of the nations we may underſtand national churches. The great whore 'is called *the great city*; ſo *the* harlots, who are her daughters, chap. xvii. 5, 'are here called *the cities of the nations*.' Apoc. Myſt. by H. K. Part ii. p. 32.

'to

*to have given her the cup of the bitter wine of his indignation.* The antichriſtian church, which had ſo well deſerved the epithet of great, from being eſtabliſhed in ſo many different countries, the Deity will no longer ſuffer to exiſt. The fair countenance of religion it will no longer deform. The contagion of infidelity it will ceaſe to diffuſe. From under it will be taken thoſe golden pillars, by which it had hitherto been ſupported. Its damnatory creeds will be trampled under foot, and its prieſts deſpoiled of their uſurped authority. *And every iſland fled away, and the mountains were not found*[7]. The governments of Europe, if antichriſtian, ſhall receive ſuch a mighty ſhock, that they ſhall paſs away, and be completely diſſolved. *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every ſtone about the weight of a talent.* The words which immediately follow are from Mr. Waple. '*And there fell upon* the wicked kings and '*men* of the earth, who were gathered together againſt 'Chriſt's kingdom, v. 14, 16, *a great hail out of heaven.*' Now, ſays Dr. Lancaſter, 'hail, by all the oneirocritics, 'c. cxix, is interpreted of *inroads* of enemies killing and 'deſtroying,' and 'it is uſed to the very ſame purpoſe in 'the prophets[8].' When, therefore, it is added, that *every ſtone*, which fell upon them, was *about the weight of a talent*; it ſeems neceſſary to underſtand, that all the profligate princes, and the whole tribe of thoſe who oppoſe the commencement of the kingdom of Chriſt in Europe (for this is the part of the globe which the apoſtle John has here in view), ſhall not only be defeated in war, but that the calamities, reſulting from the proſecution of it, will, previouſly to their utter diſcomfiture, be extraordinarily

[7] On the two clauſes of this ſentence I refer the reader to p. 431 and p. 432.

[8] This is ſhewn at length in the prophetic alphabet of Dr. More.

dinarily heavy and ſevere. The figurative *hail* is to fall from the ſymbolic *heaven*; i. e. it is to deſcend from ſome of thoſe governments, which are founded on the rights of man, and which are now become hoſtile to the tyrants who trample on them. For it is not to be ſuppoſed, that the Deity, benevolent as he is, will interpoſe, viſibly and miraculouſly, to overturn the arbitrary monarchies of the world, which are ſo fatally ſubverſive of human happineſs. The agency of thoſe natural cauſes, which he has appointed to operate, will, at length, be found fully adequate to the production of this great cataſtrophe.

The deſtruction of the antichriſtian empire, as Mr. Pyle remarks, 'is not to be underſtood as effected in a 'ſingle point of time and *all at once*; but *gradually* 'and by ſucceeding events of Providence one after ano-'ther[9]'. The prophet, alſo, it is obſervable, declares, that thoſe who were chaſtiſed by the judgments of the laſt of the vials *blaſphemed God*. It is plain then, that this claſs of perſons, notwithſtanding their ſufferings, will not all at once repent; and it is probable, that this generation of them will *continue* to breathe ſentiments adverſe to the welfare of mankind. Hence too is the poſition evident, *that there will be no ſupernatural interference of the Deity*. Were this to happen, and did Chriſt appear in perſon, they *would* repent. The light of truth would be too powerful to be farther reſiſted.

With a reference to the ſeventh vial, and the prophecies of the Old and New Teſtament parallel to it, I ſhall quote the words of a celebrated prelate. 'If a long ſeries of 'prophecy is applicable to the preſent ſtate of the 'church, and to the political ſituations of the kingdoms 'of the world, ſome thouſand years after theſe prophecies 'were delivered, and a long ſeries of prophecy delivered

[9] P. 135.

'before

'before the coming of Chriſt is applicable to him; theſe 'things are in themſelves a proof, that the prophetic hiſ-'tory was intended of him, and of thoſe events: in pro-'portion as the general turn of it is capable of ſuch appli-'cation, and to the number and variety of particular pro-'phecies capable of it'[10].

To elucidate what is ſaid in the ſeventh vial reſpecting the ſymbolic Babylon, chapters xvii and xviii of the apocalypſe ſhould be conſulted. From theſe chapters ſome paſſages have, indeed, already been quoted. But there are two, which are remarkable, and which have not been cited, which ſhall now be alleged. It is not improbable, that, to a careleſs obſerver, they may have appeared altogether irreconcileable.

St. John, after announcing the fall of Babylon, ſays, *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciouſly with her, ſhall bewail her, and lament for her*[11], *when they ſhall ſee the ſmoke of her burning; ſtanding afar off for the fear of her torment*[12], *ſaying, alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come*[13].

Apprized that their own intereſts and their own fate are intimately involved in her's, it is no wonder, that they ſympathiſe in her ſufferings, and, when they contemplate the progreſs of her overthrow, feel the moſt poignant

[10] Butler's Analogy, 1750, p. 369.

[11] 'The Holy Ghoſt is not content to ſay, that they wept, or bewailed 'with tears, which is the ſignification of κλαυσουσι, but they proceeded to 'the exceſs of grief practiſed among the Jews; which conſiſted in 'knocking their breaſts, which is the ſignification of κοψονται.' Daubuz in loc. Accordingly Mr. Wakefield's tranſlation runs thus: *and the kings of the earth, who ſhared in her whoredoms and luxuries, will weep over her, and beat themſelves in ſorrow:*

[12] '*Standing afar off, for the fear of her torment*, which,' ſays Mr. Waple, 'they know they have deſerved, and muſt ſhortly feel.'

[13] XVIII. 9, 10.

emotions

emotions of grief and diſquietude. It is to be expected, with reſpect alſo to this prophecy, that it will not all at once be accompliſhed, but that it will have ſucceſſive ſtages of fulfilment. Already has it begun to be verified. At the fall of that hierarchy, which belongs to *the Tenth Part of the city*, as well as at the ſubſequent abolition of other national churches, *the kings of the earth* were to *lament for her*, and to *bewail* her fate, when they perceive that her *judgment is come*, ſuddenly and unexpectedly. Since the firſt of theſe verſes repreſents the antichriſtian kings of Europe as *having* not only *committed fornication* with that emblematic perſonage, the Babyloniſh woman, but as having alſo *lived deliciouſly with her*; does it not ſeem to point out, not merely their idolatries, but alſo that luxury and prodigality of expence, which have diſtinguiſhed ſo many of the European courts, as well as that of the Roman pontiff, and many of the more opulent prelates, and which have had ſo fatal an influence in ſpreading the contagion of vice through all ranks of ſociety?

The other paſſage, which I propoſed to notice, is in ch. xvii, where the angel of the viſion ſays, *and the ten horns, which thou ſaweſt upon the beaſt, theſe ſhall hate the whore, and ſhall make her deſolate, and naked, and ſhall eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire.* Since it is plain, that thoſe who deſtroy the hierarchies of Europe cannot be thoſe who lament their fall[14]; we are under the

[14] This difficulty is ſo palpable as to have been long felt. The following is a mode of removing it. Previouſly to my introduction of it, I obſerve, that the author of *the New Syſtem of the Apocalypſe* ſuppoſes, erroneouſly as I conceive, that the proper and only ſignification of the deſtruction of Babylon by the ten horns, deſcribed in ch. xviii, is the deſtruction of *the city* of Rome. 'If,' ſays he (p. 103), 'it ſhall be objected, that this is 'contrary to what St. John ſaith of kings, namely, that upon the beholding 'the *ſmoke of her burning*, they *ſhall mourn over her*: I anſwer, that when 'Rome

the neceſſity of concluding, that the ten horns, which are repreſented in this verſe as overturning their reſpective eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, muſt, previouſly to this, have undergone ſome eſſential change. Thoſe new governments, which ſhall be eſtabliſhed, in the different countries of the Weſtern Roman empire, on the ruins of the old ones, they accordingly appear to denote.

It has already been ſeen, that an *horn* is a ſymbol ſuſceptible of ſome latitude of ſignification; ſince it is applied not only to proper monarchies, but alſo to the papacy. 'An horn is an emblem of ſtrength, ſo it comes 'to ſignify power and authority:—and from thence it is 'applied to denote ſovereignty or dominion[15].' In agreement with this extenſive meaning of the word, the commentators obſerve, and among others bp. Newton[16], Daubuz[17], and Vitringa, that *a horn* may denote a republic as well as a monarchy. Of itſelf it is not a ſymbol of bad import. But, Dr. Lancaſter obſerves, '*horns* '*upon a wild beaſt* are not only expreſſive of powers, 'but alſo of ſuch powers as are tyrannical, ravenous, and 'at enmity with God.' There is no need, then, to ſuppoſe, that the ten horns, which are to be the deſtroyers of *Babylon*, are the identical ten horns, which conſtituted the wild beaſt, pourtrayed by St. John in the xiiith ch. and repreſented by him as principally carrying on his tyranny for the period of 1260 years. They are their immediate ſucceſſors. In ch. xii the prophet makes men-

'Rome comes to be beſieged, fire from heaven will fall upon her, as it 'did upon Sodom; and that the kings who had beſieged her will lament 'and mourn, to find that the immediate hand of God ſhould raviſh them 'of ſo fine a prey, and ſo rich a ſpoil, as that would have been.' A writer, ſo well acquainted with the ſymbolic ſtructure of the apocalypſe, would not have embraced ſo improbable an explication, had it not been found convenient for obviating a perplexing difficulty.

[15] Mr. Lowth on Dan. vii. 24.

[16] Vol. II. p. 33. [17] P. 507.

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tion of ten horns[18], which were the *predeceſſors* of the ten-horned wild-beaſt, were then in a dependent ſtate[19], and conſtituted the dominions of another perſonage, the dragon, the repreſentative of Pagan Rome. We have, therefore, the leſs reaſon to wonder, that, in the paſſage under conſideration, other ten horns are ſpoken of as exiſting, *after* that the Beaſt deſcribed in ch. xiii was deſtroyed.

Daniel, ſpeaking of the *little horn*, ſays (vii. 26), *but the judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take away his dominion; to conſume and to deſtroy it unto the end.* An attentive inſpection of this paſſage, and of the context, will ſerve to ſhew, that the papacy will not be demoliſhed, and the church of Rome diſſolved, by the ſovereigns of Europe, but by the newly-erected governments. It is, indeed, plainly incredible, that the princes of the European world ſhould be ſo blind to their intereſts, as to diſcard ſo powerful, ſo active, and ſo zealous an ally as the church; and ſhould, notwithſtanding the recollection of paſt, and the hope of future, ſervices, meditate her ruin, and declare open war againſt her.

When St. John ſays, *the ten horns—ſhall eat* the *fleſh* of the whore of Babylon, *and burn her with fire*, the ſlighteſt attention to theſe expreſſions, it might be apprehended, would be ſufficient to perſuade him, who is converſant in the language of prophecy, that they are to be figuratively underſtood. Yet bp. Newton, notwithſtanding he admits that the former of theſe prophetic clauſes is ſymbolical, nevertheleſs ſuppoſes, that to *burn her with fire* is to be literally underſtood, and ſignifies, that *the city* of Rome ſhall be totally conſumed by fire. He thinks it worthy of the wiſdom of the divine author

[18] V. 3.

[19] '*The ten horns of the dragon* are not adorned with crowns, becauſe 'they were nothing ſave bare provinces of Heathen Rome under the em-'perors.' *New Syſt. of Apoc.* p. 50.

of

of the apocalypſe, that an ample portion of it ſhould relate to the conflagration and deſolate ſtate of the papal city; and declares it to be his opinion, that the whole of the xviiith ch. conſiſting of four and twenty verſes, is of an import thus confined. This opinion, having been long ago advanced, is oppoſed by Dr. More. After obſerving, that *to burn with fire* 'ſignifies only to con-'ſume and deſtroy, and to make to ceaſe to be what it was;' he ſays, 'I muſt confeſs I ſee no neceſſity of any ſuch 'war, as ſhould aim at the burning of the ancient city of 'Rome, but that this prophecy may be fulfilled without 'any ſuch martial noiſe, or ruins, or garments rolled in 'blood[20].'

*The ten horns ſhall hate the whore*, &c. 'Theſe 'words,' ſays Brenius, 'do not require, that they ſhould 'all, at the ſame time, riſe up againſt the whore, but it is 'ſufficient for their punctual verification, that now theſe, 'now thoſe, ſhould conceive, on different occaſions, a 'deteſtation of her, until at length, with united force 'and council, they conſpire for her deſtruction.' Accordingly we find, that this prophecy has already begun to be fulfilled. The French nation have overthrown their hierarchy, deſpoiled her of her ornaments, and reſumed her territorial revenues.

To prove that the explanation I have offered of St. John's words is no novel interpretation; I ſhall quote from two writers of the laſt century, and firſt from the celebrated Dr. John Owen. '*The ten horns, which thou 'ſaweſt upon the beaſt*, being now ſhaken, changed, and 'tranſlated in mind, intereſt, and perhaps government; '*theſe hate the whore, and ſhall make her deſolate.*' And, a little farther, he ſtates his opinion in more deciſive language, and does not employ a *perhaps*. Speaking of the

[20] Myſt. of Iniq. p. 306.

'total deſtruction of Babylon, the man of ſin, and all his 'adherents;' he ſays, 'as Sampſon, intending the deſt-'ruction of the princes, lords, and reſidue of the Philiſ-'tines, who were gathered together in their idol-temple, 'effected it by pulling away the pillars whereby the build-'ing was ſupported, whereupon the whole frame toppled 'to the ground; ſo the Lord, intending the ruin of that 'mighty power, whoſe top ſeems to reach to heaven, will 'do it by pulling away the pillars and ſupporters of it, 'after which it cannot ſtand one moment. Now what 'are the pillars of that fatal building? Are they 'not the powers of the world, as preſently ſtated 'and framed?—In this mighty work the Lord Jeſus 'Chriſt will make uſe of *the power of the nations, the 'horns* of them, that is their ſtrength, Rev. xvii. 16. 'They muſt *hate the whore, and make her deſolate, and 'naked, and eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire.* Now 'whether this can be accompliſhed or no in their preſent 'poſture, is eaſily diſcernible.—Are not moſt potentates 'tied by oath, or other compact, to maintain either the 'whole, or ſome part, of the old tower, under the name 'of rites of holy church, prelates, and the like? And 'can any expect, that ſuch as theſe ſhould take up the 'deſpiſed quarrel of the ſaints againſt that flouriſhing 'queen[21]?. Doubtleſs no ſuch fruit will grow on theſe 'trees, before they are thoroughly ſhaken[22].' My next citation is from Mr. Haughton's treatiſe on Antichriſt.

[21] Dr. Owen means *the whore of Babylon*, of whom St. John ſays (xviii. 7), that *ſhe ſaith in her heart, I ſit a queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* She is no widow, becauſe ſhe has a marriage-contract, or rather becauſe ſhe carries on an adulterous commerce, with the kings of the earth. 'He,' ſays Dr. Owen, 'that thinks Babylon is confined to Rome, 'and its open idolatry, knows nothing of Babylon, nor of *the New* Jeru-'ſalem.' *Col. of Serm.* ſerm. 37.

[22] *Col. of Serm.* ſerm. 38.

'By

'By horns here, it is not needful to underſtand *kings* in 'the ſtrictneſs and formality of the notion.' By *the ten* horns 'is meant only, the ſupreme power of the ten 'nations, by what names or titles ſoever they are called. 'Chriſt by *the earthquake* will ſhake down thoſe powers, 'in whom are found a deal of carnal and popiſh dregs, 'and ſet up thoſe in their room that are men of other 'ſpirits, *pares negotio*, fit for ſuch a buſineſs as Chriſt 'hath in hand. Doubtleſs, the ten horns are the ten 'ſupreme Powers of Europe, who ſhall do the deed, that 'is ſo much deſired and prayed for[23].'

On the prophet's emblem of *horns* enough has been ſaid. The meaning of the other ſymbols I now proceed minutely to develope. *And the ten horns ſhall hate the whore* of Babylon. For the church of Rome, and every eccleſiaſtical tyranny, the new governments ſhall entertain ſentiments of fixed deteſtation and abhorrence. They *ſhall make her deſolate*, i. e. they ſhall cauſe her falſe worſhip to be abandoned: and they ſhall, adds the prophet, make her *naked*, i. e. ſhall bring ſhame and diſgrace upon the antichriſtian church; for *nakedneſs* is, ſays Dr. Lancaſter, a ſymbol of theſe ideas. *Her fleſh* alſo they *ſhall eat*. On theſe ſymbols I quote from Dr. Lancaſter. 'Fleſh ſignifies the riches, goods, and poſſeſ-'ſions of any perſon or ſubject, conquered, oppreſſed, 'or ſlain.' For proof of this, appeal may be made to the Pſalms, to Iſaiah, to Micah, and to Zechariah. 'And 'thus in Dan. vii. 5, to devour much fleſh is to conquer 'and ſpoil many enemies of their lands and poſſeſſions. 'All the oneirocritics concur in the ſame expoſition of this 'ſymbol.' For inſtance, the Indian interpreter, in Achmet, 'ſays compendiouſly and at once, fleſh is univer-

[23] P. 98, 99. The ten horns in this paſſage Lowman explains of *the nations* of Europe.

'ſally interpreted of riches. To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks 'alſo Artemidorus.' *To eat*, 'when it comes under the 'notion of devouring, ſignifies deſtruction any way, or 'taking from others.' From this clauſe of the prophet, ſays Daubuz, 'it appears, that the Secular powers, who 'ſhall attack this *whore*, will not only ſtrip her of her 'riches and revenues, but ſhall appropriate them to 'themſelves.' To conclude the whole, they ſhall *burn her with fire*. Theſe are both ſymbols of deſtruction. I, therefore, cannot employ any words, which will ſuggeſt a more correct idea of their meaning, than thoſe of Mr. Cradock upon this paſſage. They 'ſhall utterly de-'ſtroy her.'

The deſtroyers of the ſymbolic Babylon, ſays Daubuz, will appropriate her riches to themſelves. It will, indeed, be admitted, that every hierarchy, which is anti-chriſtian, it is proper to diſſolve; and, when diſſolved, to whom can its poſſeſſion ſo properly revert as to the nation, in whoſe boſom it was ſeated, and to the government, which *they* have thought proper to conſtitute? On the right which a ſtate poſſeſſes to alienate the lands, and to terminate the exiſtence, of an eſtabliſhed church, the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* of Mackintoſh may be conſulted. 'The lands of the church,' ſays this able reaſoner and eloquent writer, 'poſſeſs not the moſt ſimple and indiſ-'penſible requiſites of property. They are not even 'pretended to be held for the *benefit* of thoſe who enjoy 'them. This is the obvious criterion between *private* '*property* and a *penſion for public ſervice*. The deſti-'nation of the firſt is avowedly the comfort and happineſs 'of the individual who enjoys it.' It is confeſſed, that no individual prieſt is a proprietor. Now if all the prieſts, taken *individually*, are 'not proprietors, the prieſthood, 'as a *body*, cannot claim any ſuch right. For what is a '*body*, but an aggregate of individuals, and what new 'right can be conveyed by a mere change of name?—All

'men

'men who enter into the public ſervice muſt do ſo with 'the implied condition of ſubjecting their emoluments, 'and even their official exiſtence, to the exigencies of the 'ſtate.—The property of individuals is eſtabliſhed on a '*general* principle, which ſeems coeval with civil ſociety 'itſelf. But *bodies* are inſtruments fabricated by the legi-'ſlator for a *ſpecific* purpoſe, which ought to be preſerved 'while they are beneficial, amended when they are im-'paired, and rejected when they become uſeleſs or inju-'rious[24].'

'The treaty of Weſtphalia,' ſays Mr. Mackintoſh, 'ſecularized many of the moſt opulent benefices of Ger-'many, under the mediation and guarantee of the firſt 'Catholic Powers of Europe. In our own iſland, on the 'abolition of epiſcopacy in Scotland at the Revolution, 'the revenues of the church peaceably devolved on the 'ſovereign, and he devoted a portion of them to the ſup-'port of the new eſtabliſhment. When at a ſtill later 'period, the Jeſuits were ſuppreſſed in moſt Catholic 'monarchies, the wealth of that formidable and opulent 'body was every where ſeized by the ſovereign[25].' A foreign writer, ſpeaking of the emperor Joſeph, and his hoſtility to the monks and abbés of his dominions, ſays, 'Here you ſee the good which war effects in chriſtianity; 'for war coſts immenſe ſums, and princes borrow. New 'wars, new debts, which muſt be paid. The treaſury 'being empty, what is to be done? The only remedy is 'to ſtrip the clergy of their wealth; and neceſſity obliges 'monarchs to recur to this ſole remaining expedient. 'Were our Calvin a witneſs of theſe events, he would thus 'addreſs us. Admire, brethren, the impenetrable ways of 'Providence! The Being of Beings, who abhors the hor-'rible and ſacrilegious ſuperſtition into which the church

[24] See edit. 1. p. 82—102 [25] P. 93.

'has fallen, makes not the voice of the ſage the inſtru-
'ment to render truth triumphant; nor degns to work
'miracles to root up error! What then is the inſtrument
'this Being employs for the deſtruction of monks; and
'to cauſe thoſe vile and impure organs of fanaticiſm to
'vaniſh from the face of the earth? Kings, brethren,
'Kings! That is to ſay, the moſt ignorant ſpecies of
'men that crawl on the ſurface of this globe. And how
'does the great Demiurgos make this ignorant ſpecies
'promote his end? By their intereſt, brethren. Yes!
'Infamous intereſt! For once, thou ſhalt be uſeful to
'mankind; by exciting the paſſions of theſe demi-gods of
'the age, by bidding them pillage the hoards of prieſts,
'thou ſhalt arm them with a deſtructive falchion, to cut
'off the race whoſe ſacrilegious appetite and inſatiate en-
'trails were unceaſingly crammed with fleſh and blood.'
The reader may perhaps be ready to conjecture, that the paſſage which he has juſt peruſed has been written ſubſequent to the accompliſhment of the French Revolution; and perhaps he will ſuſpect it to be the production of a native of France, and a zealot of democracy. But it is far otherwiſe. The author of this invective againſt princes and prieſts was himſelf a ſovereign and a tyrant. It is extracted from a letter, which was written by the late king of Pruſſia to M. D'Alembert, and dated the 14th of July, 1781[26].

But though his Pruſſian majeſty's ſtatement be perfectly true, that the ſceptered deſpots of Europe have, in many inſtances, ſeized on a large portion of the wealth of thoſe, who plunder or tyrannize in an eccleſiaſtical character; yet there are the ſtrongeſt reaſons for concluding, that the power of the latter will be completely demoliſhed,

[26] Poſthumous Works of Frederic II. K. of Pruſſia, tranſlated by Mr. Holcroft, vol XII. p. 281.

and

and their revenues principally confiſcated, not by the rapacity of monarchs, but by the authority of nations and the decrees of legiſlatures.

There is another prophecy of the apocalypſe, where the ſymbol of *eating fleſh* is a ſecond time introduced, which more immediately concerns the ſceptered tyrants of Europe themſelves. It is in ch. xix. The latter part of it there has before been occaſion to quote and to explain. It was to the deſtruction of the *antichriſtian church*, as eſtabliſhed in different parts of the European world, and to the confiſcation of its revenues, that the prophecy, which I laſt explained, plainly referred. The paſſage which follows foretells the complete deſtruction of the *antichriſtian monarchies* of Europe, and the confiſcation of thoſe mighty treaſures and immenſe poſſeſſions, which the antichriſtian princes and *their* reſpective partiſans have ſo diligently accumulated.

Whilſt *he*, whoſe *name is called the Word of God*, is repreſented in v. 15 as *treading the wine-preſs of the fierceneſs and wrath of Almighty God*; in verſes 17 and 18, 19 and 20, the prophet ſays, *And I ſaw an angel ſtanding in the ſun; and he cried with a loud voice, ſaying to all the fowls that fly in the midſt of heaven, Come and gather yourſelves together to the ſupper of the Great God; that ye may eat the fleſh of kings, and the fleſh of captains, and the fleſh of mighty men, and the fleſh of horſes, and of them that ſit on them, and the fleſh of all men, both free and bond, both ſmall and great. And I ſaw the beaſt, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war againſt him that ſat on the horſe, and againſt his army. And the beaſt was ſeized, and with him the falſe teacher*[27], *who ſhewed before him*

[27] In the Common Tranſlation it is *the falſe prophet*. A part of the laſt ſentence I have given, as tranſlated by Mr. Wakefield.

*thoſe wonders, by which he ſeduced them that had received the mark of the beaſt, and the worſhippers of his image: and both were caſt alive into a lake of fire.* On the decorum of the ſymbols themſelves Dr. Lancaſter may be cited. 'This deſtruction of them is repreſented, as a *ſacrifice* to God's juſtice, and as ſuch, attended with a *feaſt*[28]; it being the cuſtom of the Jews and Gentiles to feaſt upon the fleſh of the victims offered in ſacrifice. And therefore ſince their fleſh is to be eaten, the birds of prey, who are obſerved to follow armies and fall upon the ſlain, are invited to the feaſt, which is called *the great ſupper of God*, as being a perfection and completion of the judgments of God.'

To explain, as ſome commentators have done, a large part of the foregoing prophecy, as ſignifying the ſlaughter of the antichriſtian princes of Europe[29], appears to me too literal an interpretation. It points not ſo much to their defeat, as to the *conſequences* of that defeat.

The falſe prophet, and the ten-horned beaſt, *were caſt alive into a lake of fire*; i. e. the antichriſtian church and antichriſtian monarchies of Europe are to be utterly deſtroyed. At the ſame time, to uſe the prophetic diction, *the fleſh of kings*, of *captains*, and of *mighty men, and of all men*[30], *both free and bond, both ſmall and great*, is to be *eaten*. 'Here,' ſays Dr. Lancaſter, 'the deſtruction of *the beaſt*, and *the falſe prophet*, and their adherents, is repreſented as a total deſtruction, from which not ſo much as one of whatever quality or condition will eſ-

[28] 'God having decreed to deſtroy, and ſacrifice to juſtice, the beaſt, the falſe prophet, and their obſtinate adherents, they, *and all they have*, ſerve him to make up his feaſt.' Daubuz.

[29] That the prophecy juſt cited denotes 'literally great ſlaughter of men,' is the opinion of Dr. Prieſtley. Faſt Serm. for Feb. 28, 1794, p. 12.

[30] It is proper to acquaint the reader, that the word *men* is not in the original.

'cape.'

'cape.' 'But,' ſays Daubuz, 'it muſt be limited to the ſubject in queſtion.' It is to be confined to the partiſans of civil or of eccleſiaſtical tyranny. They are the perſons, whoſe privileges are to be ſacrificed, and whoſe power is to be overturned.

Any attempt to explain the ſymbolic import of *the fleſh of horſes* being *eaten*, I do not remember to have ſeen. That it forms only a part of the general deſcription, and admits not of a ſeparate interpretation, is by no means improbable. A particular and appropriate explication of it would, however, it muſt be admitted, be more ſatisfactory. As the preceding expreſſions of *kings*, *captains*, and *mighty men*, which are introduced in a ſimilar manner to the word *horſes*, are, it is agreed, to be underſtood not ſymbolically, but literally; it is *poſſible*, the latter expreſſion may ſignify, that thoſe lands and poſſeſſions, which have hitherto been employed, by princes, by nobles, by the long line of their imitators, and by all the various retainers of a modern monarchy, for the maintenance of thoſe innumerable horſes, which ſerve no other purpoſe than to mount cavalry in war, or to gratify the deſires of vanity and luxurious indolence, ſhall be converted to other uſes, and appropriated to objects of ſolid advantage and general utility. Certainly this is not an unimportant circumſtance to the happineſs of mankind. There are few countries of Europe, in which the ſubſiſtence and comforts of the maſs of the people are not materially affected, and in which they are not rendered more ſcanty and precarious, by the crowds of horſes which are unneceſſarily kept; and which are maintained in conſequence of the nature of the ſubſiſting governments, the prevalence of falſe ideas, and the extreme inequality which exiſts between the different ranks of ſociety. Even of philoſophers there are, I believe, but few, who are apprized of the magnitude of the evil.

*All the fowls, that fly in the midſt of heaven*, are, ſays the prophet, to be *gathered together to the ſupper of the Great God*. 'As birds of prey,' ſays Daubuz, 'feed upon carcaſes, ſo thoſe that take the goods of other men eat 'as it were their fleſh; which, in the ſymbolic language, 'ALWAYS ſignifies riches or ſubſtance. Now the ſymbol is in itſelf indifferent. The commiſſion is that which 'makes the act lawful when God invites, who has a ſupreme power to beſtow the goods of this world as he 'pleaſes; and in this caſe it is an act of his juſtice, but it 'is an evil to them that ſuffer by it. They are evil to 'them at leaſt, though theſe birds of prey be ſuch as do 'well in accepting God's offer.—As *heaven* ſignifies the 'ſupreme powers,' *the fowls that fly in the midſt of heaven* denote, 'ſuch as in this Revolution are, or become, 'of a ſuperior condition. Or perhaps all the princes and 'others who ſhall divide the ſpoils are only reckoned in 'an inferior ſtate and under-governors, becauſe none is 'now ſupreme.' This ſtatement of the accurate Daubuz, had he employed ſome other word, inſtead of *princes*, would, I believe, have been perfectly correct. The principal agents in the ſeizure and diſtribution of the confiſcated property of the ten-horned and two-horned beaſts, denominated by the prophet *the fowls that fly in the midſt of heaven*, appear to denote ſuch perſons, as ſhall occupy official ſituations in the newly-erected governments, though, from the nature of thoſe governments, none of them will be inveſted with ſupreme power.

After alleging thoſe memorable words of the prophet, in v. 21, that *all the fowls were filled with their fleſh*, Daubuz ſays, 'This Great Revolution muſt produce a 'Great Change in the Secular Government, and Pro'perty of Lands, within the territories of corrupted Chriſt'endom.' That there has already been a complete change, in theſe two important reſpects, in the dominions of one of

of the moſt powerful horns of the Secular beaſt, every European is apprized.

I ſhall conclude the chapter with ſome ſtriking obſervations of an illuſtrious writer. 'If,' ſays Sir I. Newton, 'the laſt age, the age of opening theſe things, *be* 'now approaching, as by the great ſucceſſes of late interpreters it ſeems to be, we have more encouragement than 'ever to look into theſe things. If the general preaching 'of the goſpel be approaching, it is to us, and our poſterity, that thoſe words mainly belong: *In the time of* '*the end the wiſe ſhall underſtand, but none of the wicked* '*ſhall underſtand. Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they* '*that hear*[31] *the words of this prophecy, and keep thoſe* '*things which are written therein*[32].—As the few and obſcure prophecies concerning *Chriſt's firſt coming* were 'for ſetting up the Chriſtian religion, which ALL NATIONS HAVE SINCE CORRUPTED; ſo the many and 'clear prophecies, concerning the things to be done at '*Chriſt's ſecond coming*, are not only for predicting, but 'alſo for EFFECTING, a recovery and re-eſtabliſhment 'of the long-loſt truth, and SETTING-UP *a kingdom* '*wherein dwells righteouſneſs*. The event will prove 'the apocalypſe; and this prophecy, thus proved and underſtood, will open the old prophets, and all together 'will make known the true religion, and eſtabliſh it. 'For he that will underſtand the old prophets muſt begin 'with this; but the time is not yet come for underſtanding them perfectly, becauſe THE MAIN REVOLUTION, 'predicted in them, is not yet come to paſs. *In the days* '*of the voice of the ſeventh angel, when he ſhall begin to* '*ſound, the myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed, as he hath*

[31] i. e. ſays Vitringa, *that underſtand*. This, indeed, is a frequent ſenſe of ακουω.

[32] Apoc. i. 3.

'*declared*

'*declared to his ſervants the prophets:* and then *the king-*
'*doms of this world ſhall become the kingdoms of our*
'*Lord and his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever*, Apoc.
'x. 7; xi. 15. There is already ſo much of the pro-
'phecy fulfilled, that as many as will take pains in this
'ſtudy may ſee ſufficient inſtances of God's providence:
'but then the ſignal Revolutions, predicted by ALL the
'holy prophets, will at once both turn men's eyes upon
'conſidering the predictions, and plainly interpret them[33].'

His firſt chapter on the apocalypſe Sir I. Newton concludes with the following obſervation: 'Amongſt the in-
'terpreters of the laſt age, there is ſcarce ONE of note,
'who hath not made ſome diſcovery worth knowing; and
'thence I ſeem to gather, that God is about opening theſe
'myſteries[34].'

[33] P. 251, 252. Like Sir I. Newton, Jurieu is diſpoſed to believe, that the Deity may think proper 'at laſt to make the prophecies be underſtood, 'that they may the more eaſily be fulfilled.' See Suppl. to the Introd. of Jurieu; and vol. II. p. 39.

[34] This obſervation is adopted by biſhop Law (in his *Theory of Religion*, 3d ed. p. 170); and not unſimilar is the language of another learned and liberal prelate. 'Though the name has been diſgraced by a number of 'hireling compilers, yet no competent critic has,' ſays bp. Newcome, 'carefully ſtudied the ſcriptures for himſelf, without ſmoothing the rug-
'gedneſs of the way to thoſe who follow him.' Verſ. of the Twelve Minor Prophets, pref. p. 9.

CHAP.

# CHAPTER XXVII.

## ON THE LATTER PART OF THE PROPHECY OF JESUS, RECORDED IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER OF LUKE.

A MEMORABLE paſſage in the invaluable prophecy of Jeſus, delivered by him on the mount of Olives a ſhort time before his crucifixion, has been explained[1]; and it has been ſeen, that its ſymbolic import is ſcarcely darkened by any degree of doubt or ambiguity. But it is not ſufficient that *its* meaning be aſcertained. That of *the context* ought alſo to be examined into; and the reſult of the enquiry, I apprehend, will be, not merely that the interpretation of the verſe alluded to perfectly harmonizes with the context, but that it is the only one which does. In truth, the common explications of our Lord's prophecy labour under inſuperable difficulties; and Dr. John Edwards, an orthodox clergyman, who flouriſhed at the concluſion of the laſt and the commencement of the preſent century, accordingly obſerves, that he had never met with any expoſitor, 'that gave a clear and ſatisfactory account of it[2].'

Another Dr. Edwards, a clergyman of a different period and different principles, ſpeaking of the xxivth ch. of Matthew, ſays, 'the various and oppoſite methods, which 'theologians have adopted to remove an objection which 'is too obvious to be overlooked, form, it muſt be con-'feſſed, a very conſiderable preſumption, that an adequate

[1] In chapter xxii.

[2] *Theologia Reformata*, 1713, fol. vol. I. p. 471.

'ſolution

'ſolution of the difficulty[3] has not hitherto been diſ-
'covered, and that the objection is founded on the baſis of
'truth. Some interpreters imagine that the prophecy
'relates entirely to the ruin of the Jewiſh nation: others,
'by the convenient introduction of types and double
'ſenſes, preſerve in it a reference throughout to the con-
'ſummation of all things: ſome have contended that it
'partly belongs to the former, and partly to the latter;
'but what portions of it are applicable to the one, and
'what to the other, they cannot aſcertain: while a few
'have ventured to aſſert, that it repreſents the final judg-
'ment as immediately ſubſequent to the Jewiſh calami-
'ties[4].' The different modes of explaining our Lord's prophecy Dr. Edwards here profeſſes to ſtate. But there is another method of explication, of which this learned writer appears to be entirely ignorant; a method which has not, indeed, been adopted, or even been noticed, in any of the commentaries on the Goſpels which this country has produced[5], but which I nevertheleſs believe to be the true one.

That the prophecy of Jeſus is of very difficult interpretation is very generally admitted. Grotius and Lowth, Sykes, Benſon, and Macknight, bp. Watſon and the Taylors, have, Mr. Niſbett acknowledges[6] (he is here

[3] Of the *particular* difficulty to which Dr. Edwards alludes notice will hereafter be taken.

[4] Serm. on the Predictions of the Apoſtles concerning the End of the World, 1790, p. 18.

[5] Accordingly when I firſt applied the latter part of the prophecy of Chriſt to the downfal of antichriſtian uſurpation, and particularly that verſe in it, which has been ſo copiouſly explained in ch. xxii. like Dr. Edwards, I knew not that *this* application of it had received *any* countenance from preceding writers, being led to it ſolely by my knowledge of the import of our Lord's ſymbols, and the internal evidence which appeared for embracing the interpretation.

[6] Scripture Doctrine concerning the Coming of Chriſt, p. 13.

'ſpeaking

ſpeaking of the ſcripture-doctrine of *the Coming of Chriſt*), 'all of them, without exception, manifeſtly diſcovered 'their embarraſſment, and the difficulties which they la-'boured under, in conſidering the ſubject.' Surely this affords a ſtrong preſumption, that they have all failed of diſcovering the true import of Chriſt's celebrated prediction. To attempt to develope its meaning, after this declaration, may, perhaps, appear bold and preſuming. But however deſirable it may be to be exempt from the charge; I do not conceive, that it is of ſuch a nature as to command ſilence, or that the publication of important truths, or of probable concluſions, ought, in any caſe, to be ſuppreſſed from the apprehenſion of it.

As the prophecy of Chriſt was a reply to a queſtion, the ſcope of that queſtion it will be proper to ſtate. It is in the Goſpel of Matthew that it is given at the greateſt length. Jeſus having aſſured his diſciples (xxiv. 2.) that the time would arrive, when not one ſtone of the temple would be left upon another; they came to him (v. 3.), *ſaying, Tell us, when ſhall theſe things be? and what ſhall be the ſign of thy coming, and of the end of the world*[7]; or, as

[7] The word *world* is given up by the majority of Engliſh commentators as an improper rendering; and, in the Latin verſions of Jerom, Eraſmus, Beza, and Montanus, αιωνος is tranſlated not *mundi*, but *ſeculi*. 'Αιων,' ſays Mr. Waple (On the Rev. p. 248), 'ſignifies an age of the world or *ſome eminent period* of 'it;' and in correſpondence with this Dr. Hammond obſerves (on Luke. i. 70), that in the New Teſtament it 'moſt commonly is uſed in a general 'ſenſe, not for the age of a man, nor again for an hundred years, but for 'an age of the world, or ſome eminent part in the diviſion of that.' 'Sometimes,' ſays Leigh in his *Critica Sacra*, 'it is put for that which con-'tinues a long time, and of which the end is not ſo clear;' and this appears to be the exact meaning, which the diſciples here annexed to the word. They enquired what would be the ſigns of the συντελεια τε αιωνος, at the expiration of which another αιων, or eminent period, was to commence; and accordingly, in the writings of the fathers (ſee Suicerus), the word αιων frequently ſtood for this laſt period, that is to ſay for *the Thouſand Years*. In an ancient work, the book of Tobit (xiv. 5.), αιων appears manifeſtly

as it ought rather to be rendered, *of the end of the period*, i. e. the period then present? Dr. Campbell's translation is, *What will be the sign of thy coming, and of the conclusion of this state?*

The question of the disciples was two-fold: and its import, when shall that destruction of the temple which you mention happen; and what are the indications of *thy coming*, which Daniel foretells, and of the end of the present æra, when that coming is to take place?

manifestly to signify *the first of these great periods*, namely, that which is to continue till the commencement of the millennium; for it is there said of the Jews, that when *the times of the period are fulfilled* (πληρωθωσι καιροι τȣ αιωνος are the words of the Septuagint), that *they shall return from all places of their captivity*. In Isaiah, on the contrary, ch. lxv. 18, the expression, *the age to come*, signifies *the second of these long periods*, namely, the millennium; for when speaking of the future restoration of the Jews to their own land, he says (according to the amended versions of bishop Lowth and Mr. Dodson), *but ye shall rejoice and exult in the age to come*. To v. 6 of ch. ix. of Isaiah reference also deserves to be made; for in that verse, according to the best copies of the Septuagint, and agreeably to the existing Hebrew text, Christ is called πατηρ τȣ μελλοντος αιωνος, the Father of the future period. In like manner, in the Vulgate, it is *Pater futuri seculi*. See Mr. Dodson's valuable *Translation of Isaiah*, and his elaborate note on this verse.

In the Targum on Kings the period of the Messiah is denominated *the age to come*; and says bishop Kidder, 'among the other Jewish writers 'nothing is more common than to call the times of the Messiah, the *Olam 'Hava*,' i. e. ο αιων μελλων, or *the age to come*. *Demonstr. of the Messiah*, vol. III. p. 381. I close the note with a quotation from Dr. Thomas Burnet. 'The expression, αιων μελλων, is either taken largely for the 'times of the Messiah in general, or *more particularly* for the times of the 'Messiah's reign. In this last confined and *more proper* sense it is distinct 'both from the present age and from eternity, or that time, when Christ 'is to deliver up all dominion into the hands of the Father.' 1 Cor. xv. 24. 28. 'And in this proper sense, viz. taken for some age between this pre-'sent and eternity, it is often used in scripture. Christ, it is said, will 'reign εν τω αιωνι μελλοντι.' Ephes. i. 22, 23. On *the State of Departed Souls*, p. 282. See some similar observations in Dr. J. Edward's *Hist. of the Dispensations of Rel.* vol. II. p. 641.

The

The latter part of the queſtion, as paraphraſed by the great Dr. Clarke, ſtrictly anſwers to my ideas. 'And 'by what ſigns ſhall we know, when the conſummation of 'the preſent ſtate of things in the world ſhall be? And 'when, and by what Revolutions, the kingdom of the 'Meſſiah ſhall be eſtabliſhed?'

Suppoſing we had no poſitive information on the ſubject, it might fairly be preſumed, that the remarkable prophecies of Daniel, relative to the erection of the proper kingdom of the Meſſiah, were familiar to the minds of the apoſtles. That they ſhould be ſolicitous reſpecting their fulfilment, and ſhould make enquiries reſpecting them, though far from being diſtinctly apprized of their meaning, need, therefore, excite no ſurprize. This, however, is a matter not only of antecedent likelihood, but of certainty. The Goſpel-narratives amply atteſt, that there was, in fact, no ſubject reſpecting which they were more curious, no point reſpecting which they were more frequent in their enquiries, than the period, when the proper kingdom of the Meſſiah ſhould be eſtabliſhed, as foretold by the Hebrew prophet. Beſides, ſays Dr. Sykes on this verſe, 'that they meant his *coming*, as Daniel had pro-'pheſied of the Meſſiah, is plain from hence; that when 'our Lord anſwers the queſtion, he uſes the very words 'of the prophet, v. 30[8].' And ſince this judicious divine has elſewhere ſhewn[9], that wherever Chriſt employs either of thoſe expreſſions *the Kingdom of God*, or *the Son of Man*, he had an immediate view to Daniel's prophecy of his univerſal kingdom, and borrowed the expreſſions from him; and ſince our Lord, in *his* prophecy[10], has adopted both theſe expreſſions: it cannot, I think, reaſonably be doubted, that he ſpoke of the very ſame events with the

[8] Upon the Truth of Chr. p 86. [9] P. 72, 79, 85, 115.
[10] Mat. xxiv. 30, 39; Luke xxi. 27, 31.

ancient Hebrew prophet. Now from the obſervations already made upon his predictions, and from thoſe reſerved for ch. xxx, it will, I truſt, clearly appear, that *the coming of Chriſt*, which Daniel aſſures us ſhall take place quickly after the overthrow of the antichriſtian monarchies, is the commencement of that happy æra, commonly denominated the millennium.

That the latter part of Chriſt's prophecy does foretell the commencement of that auſpicious period, appeared probable on various accounts to Wolzogenius, who was among the firſt of thoſe who framed a judicious expoſition of the Evangeliſts: but, fearful of departing from the general current of interpreters, he appears to have been embarraſſed with doubts, and ventured not to *decide* in the affirmative[31]. On the mind of Brenius, however, the diſciple of the celebrated Epiſcopius, who lived about the ſame time, and whoſe works frequently accompany thoſe of Wolzogenius, no doubts remained, that the words of our Lord are thus to be interpreted. But the ideas of this eminent commentator will be beſt explained by a quotation from him. 'It is,' ſays Brenius, 'not difficult to gain information of what the diſciples understood by *the coming of Chriſt*, provided we ſhall have conſidered the hope entertained by the Jews reſpecting the Meſſiah, which was then generally prevalent, namely, that it was incumbent on him to reſtore upon earth the fallen kingdom of Iſrael, to eſtabliſh the throne of David, ſo as never to be ſhaken, and to bring deliverance to them without exception from all their enemies.

[31] See his notes on Mat. xxiv. 3, 29, 30, 31, 35. Ludovicus Wolzogenius was a nobleman of Auſtria, very unlike the generality of his own rank, now belonging to that country, as he wielded not the ſword but the pen, acquired not military but theological glory, and was perpetually recommending the practice and cultivation of the mild and pacific virtues of Chriſtianity.

'Hence

'Hence that ſpeech of the diſciples travelling to Emmaus, 'but we truſted that it had been he which ſhould have 'redeemed Iſrael. Luke xxiv. 21. Wherefore it is true, 'that by *the coming of Chriſt* alſo in this place the apoſ-'tles underſtood nothing elſe than the glorious kingdom 'of the Meſſiah to be erected upon earth, as others alſo 'have remarked before us. But this in ſcripture is 'elſewhere entitled *the kingdom of God*, concerning which 'all the prophets have predicted, and concerning the eſta-'bliſhment of which his diſciples aſked their maſter, after 'he was riſen from the dead, whether he would at that 'time *reſtore again the kingdom to Iſrael*[12].—*By the end 'of the age* then the diſciples do not underſtand the 'diſſolution of heaven and earth, but the deſtruction 'of the monarchies of the world, which had been firſt 'exhibited in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and after-'wards to Daniel; for likewiſe in Iſaiah, ch. lxv. 17. 'lxvi. 22. God is introduced ſpeaking thus of theſe 'times, *Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: 'and the former ſhall not be remembered, nor come into 'mind.* But they expected that this revolution in the 'monarchies, according to the prophecies which are ex-'tant Dan. ii and vii, would happen at the ſame time 'with *the coming of the Meſſiah*, upon whoſe entrance 'into his kingdom he would reſtore rule to Iſrael.' They thought alſo, that the ſubverſion of the temple, and the proper eſtabliſhment of Chriſt's kingdom, would be contemporary. 'Which two things it is incumbent on 'us to ſeparate: for although the diſciples, as was before 'ſaid, thought that all theſe things would occur at one 'and the ſame time, yet the event itſelf has taught us the 'contrary; ſince the demolition of the temple and city 'has now long ago happened, whilſt *the coming of*

[12] Acts i. 3, 6, 7.

'*Chriſt* is not yet accompliſhed. And in conſequence 'of this, our Lord gives a *diſtinct* anſwer to each queſtion.'

We may, ſays Dr. Lardner, readily admit the truth 'of what Joſephus ſays,—" that what principally excited " the Jewiſh people, the wiſe men," as he calls them, " as well as others, to the war with the Romans, was " the expectation of a great deliverer to ariſe among " them, who ſhould obtain the empire of the world." Indeed, 'the expectation of the coming of the Meſſiah, 'about the time of the appearance of Jeſus was univerſal, 'and had been ſo for ſome while. But with the idea of a 'prophet, or extraordinary teacher of religion, they had 'joined alſo that of a worldly king and conqueror, who 'ſhould deliver the Jewiſh people from the burdens un-'der which they laboured, raiſe them to a ſtate of inde-'pendence, and bring the nations of the earth into ſub-'jection to them, to be ruled and tyrannized over by 'them,' If our Lord 'would but have aſſumed the ſtate 'and character of an earthly prince, ſcribes and pha-'riſees, prieſts and people, would all have joined them-'ſelves to him, and have put themſelves under his ban-'ner. Of this we ſee many proofs in the goſpels[13].'

The reader who has attended to Daniel's prophecy of the deſtruction of the fourth beaſt, or the Roman empire in the concluding period of its exiſtence, and who recollects, that the prophet has not ſpecified the time when that event was to take place, will experience little difficulty in accounting for the erroneous opinion, which the diſciples had formed reſpecting the *period*, when that em-

[13] Lardner's works, vol. vii. 59. Similar is the ſtatement of Dr. Sykes. 'It is evident,' ſays he, 'that the opinion was fixed and ſettled, 'and generally received amongſt the Jews, that ſomebody of their nation 'was to get an univerſal dominion: it is teſtified on all ſides by Heathens 'and Jews, as well as Chriſtians, and conſequently cannot be denied.' *On the Tr. of the Chr. Rel.* p. 11.

pire

pire ſhould irrecoverably fall, and be ſucceeded by the proper kingdom of the Meſſiah. That they underſtood the fourth beaſt to be the Roman empire, there is no reaſon to doubt. That it was thus interpreted by the ancients in general[14], Dr. Creſſener has aſſerted and proved. A very ſmall portion of what he has urged on this ſubject I ſhall now cite. 'Rabbi Abarbinel's teſtimony 'is ſufficient for the conſent of the Jewiſh writers, being 'known to be one of the moſt learned of their nation. "Our maſters (ſays he,) are right in their tradition, that "the fourth beaſt does ſignify the Roman emperors;" 'whereby it appears to have been the common tradition 'of the learned Jews[15].' That this was the opinion of the Jewiſh church both BEFORE and after the time of Chriſt, is particularly noted by the learned Calovius[16].

It may, however, be remarked, that the anſwer of Jeſus to the enquiry of his diſciples was well adapted to rectify their miſtakes. For he informed them, that the capital of their country, inſtead of being ſpeedily emancipated from a foreign yoke, would be beſieged and deſolated, and continue to be *trodden down* by *the Gentiles*; and that the proper kingdom of the Meſſiah, which is ſo magnificently deſcribed by the prophet Daniel, ſo far from being immediately erected, as they apprehended, would not be eſtabliſhed, till wars, and a long ſeries of calamitous events, had antecedently occurred.

It is proper to obſerve, that Dr. Sykes has ſatisfactorily ſhewn (the matter, indeed, admits not of diſpute), that what our Lord addreſſes to his auditors, in the ſecond perſon, is not on that account excluſively to be referred to *them*, or to the men of that generation. Thus, after

[14] On this point the reader may look back to p. 356 and 357 of the preſent work.

[15] Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. Append. p. 5.

[16] In Dan. cap. 7.

his reſurrection, Chriſt ſaid, 'Go YE, *therefore, and* 'teach all nations,—*teaching them to obſerve what-* 'ſoever I have commanded YOU: *and, lo, I am with you* 'always, *even unto the end of the world*[17]. Here it is 'evident, that a promiſe is made which was to extend 'to the end of the world[18]; and ſince the apoſtles have 'been long ſince dead, it is evident, that, under the 'terms YE and YOU, muſt be contained all, at all times, 'in like circumſtances[19]' In the xiiith ch. of Mark (v. 37) our Lord has, indeed, himſelf in ſome degree given us intimation of this. *And what I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all, Watch.* This Doddridge thus paraphraſes: 'what I ſay to you in public characters, I ſay to all my 'diſciples, in every ſtation of life, and in every age, 'watch.'

Parallel to the xxivth chapter of Matthew and the xiiith of Mark, is the xxiſt chapter of Luke. In that chapter from v. 8 to v. 24 is a prediction[20], eminently minute and circumſtantial, of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and of the ſufferings of Chriſt's followers. To his diſciples it accordingly appears to have been addreſſed by him, as ſuſtaining the character both of Chriſtians and of Jews; and it muſt be remembered, in the explication of the ſubſequent part of the prophecy, that he ſtill purſues the ſame courſe, and that his auditors are viewed in this

[17] Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

[18] It may, however, be proper to remark, that the word employed is αἰῶν.

[19] Sykes on the Tr. of the Chr. Rel. p. 88. To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks bp. Newcome (*Obſ. on our Lord's Conduct as a Div. Inſtr. p.* 263). 'What 'our Lord ſaid to his immediate followers may well be conſidered as ad- 'dreſſed to all mankind.'

[20] On this prophecy and the evidences of its fulfilment, Whitby and Jortin, Lardner, Macknight, and bp. Newton, have all treated at great length. See alſo the briefer but valuable obſervations of biſhop Hurd (vol. I. p. 163—172), and archdeacon Paley (Evid. of Chr. 2ded. vol. II. p. 16—23).

double

double light. In v. 24 he does, however, ſpeak in the third perſon and of the Jews alone: *they ſhall fall by the edge of the ſword; and ſhall be led away captive into all nations; and Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* Moſt comnentators agree, that he ſpeaks here of two diſtinct periods. The firſt principally reſpected the great ſlaughter of the Jews under the Romans, and the calamities they were to incur from the deſtruction of their city: the ſecond extended to the whole period of their diſperſion in the nations of the world. Here then it is that he makes his tranſition, in the very place where we ſhould expect it; and commences his reply to the ſecond queſtion of his diſciples.

It is this ſecond grand diviſion of the prophecy which is now to be conſidered. As it proceeds from the very higheſt authority; as it reſpects the moſt important events, and events which are all yet unfulfilled, though ſome of them probably may not be far diſtant; as it opens to our view a new order of things, when the world ſhall be as it were renovated, and true religion ſhall reign upon the earth; it ſurely deſerves our moſt careful inſpection. Any paſſage of the ſame length, having ſtronger claims on our attention, it would in truth be impoſſible to allege. The whole of it ought, therefore, to be viewed together; and accordingly it ſhall be firſt tranſcribed, without omiſſion, and without comment. Luke's account, on ſeveral important points, is more full and complete than the parallel place in Matthew and in Mark. From him, therefore, it ſhall be taken. It reaches from the beginning of v. 25 to v. 35.

As our Lord had predicted, at the cloſe of v. 24, that *Jeruſalem* ſhould *be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*; it ſeems natural to conclude, and the contents of the prophecy itſelf will

warrant the concluſion, that, in the verſes which follow, he was going to point out thoſe momentous events, which are to take place, when *the times of the Gentiles* are *fulfilled*; or, in other words, when the long æra of ſpurious Chriſtians, of adulterated religion, and of corrupt government, which have now ſubſiſted during the revolution of ſo many centuries, ſhall be deſtined to terminate[21]. In truth, had an important particle which immediately follows been correctly rendered in our common verſion, it would have ſtruck the reader at the firſt ſight, as a matter not diſputable, but clear and decided, that this moſt illuſtrious of the prophets has, in the ſucceeding paſſage, predicted the changes, which are to be accompliſhed WHEN *the times of the Gentiles* ſhall expire.

*Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until*

[21] The *former* part of the prophecy, in the opinion of Dr. Clarke, as well as of Vitringa, is not confined to the ſufferings of the Jews and the deſtruction of their capital, but has an expreſs reference to the ſubſequent ſpread of antichriſtianiſm, and to the heavy calamities which ſhould afflict the *Chriſtian* world. In the xxivth ch. of Matthew, ſays this diſtinguiſhed Engliſh divine, 'our Lord, in anſwer to the queſtion put to him 'by his diſciples, gives them a large prophetic deſcription of the deſtruc-'tion of the city and nation of the Jews, by the power of the Romans: 'and a long ſeries of *other events*.—Our Lord tells them, that not only the 'city and temple of Jeruſalem ſhould be deſtroyed, and the Jewiſh nation 'diſperſed; but that, after this, there ſhould ſtill ſucceed a long train of 'calamities, and the end ſhould not be yet. For *Jeruſalem* ſhould *be trod-'den down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* And during 'that long period of time, in other parts of the world likewiſe, *nation* 'ſhould *riſe againſt nation, and kingdom againſt kingdom*; *and there* ſhould '*be famines and peſtilences and earthquakes in divers places*, and that even all 'theſe calamities, comparatively ſpeaking, ſhould be but the *beginning of* '*ſorrows*. For a deluge of corruption and iniquity ſhould overſpread 'the world. And there ſhould be very great and very long perſecutions: 'and a time of tribulation, ſuch as had *not* been *ſince the beginning of the* '*world*.' See Mat. xxiv. 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 21. *Seventeen Sermons on Several Occaſions*, by Dr. S. Clarke, 1724, p. 378, 382. On this ſubject the reader alſo may look back to p. 393 of the preſent work.

*the*

*the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* THEN *ſhall there be ſigns in the ſun, and in the moon, and in the ſtars; and upon the earth diſtreſs of nations, with perplexity; the ſea and the waves roaring: mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken. And then*[22] *ſhall they ſee the ſon of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when theſe things* BEGIN *to come to paſs,* THEN *look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he ſpake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now ſhoot forth, ye ſee and know of your ownſelves that ſummer is now at hand. So likewiſe ye, when ye ſee theſe things come to paſs, know ye that the kingdom of God is now nigh at hand. Verily I ſay unto you, this generation ſhall not paſs away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away: but my word ſhall not paſs away. And take heed to yourſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs and cares of this life, and ſo* THAT DAY *come upon you unawares. For as a ſnare ſhall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.*

In this long paſſage I have, in a ſingle inſtance, deviated from the Engliſh verſion. An alteration, introduced by Mr. Wakefield into his valuable tranſlation, I have adopted as clearly a right one; ſubſtituting the words *then ſhall there be ſigns*[23], inſtead of *and there ſhall be ſigns.*

*Then*

[22] Τοτε, *then*, i. e. 'after the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.' Grotius in loc.

[23] There ſeems little reaſon for doubting, that our Lord in ſpeaking uſed *vau*, which correſponds to και in the Greek. Now ſuch is the frequency with which *vau* ſignifies *then* in the Hebrew bible, that no leſs than two or three hundred inſtances of it are ſpecified in the concordance of Noldius.

After

*Then ſhall there be ſigns in the ſun, and in the moon, and in the ſtars.* Already has the parallel verſe in Matthew been carefully conſidered[24]; and, being larger and more diſtinct, it throws a light upon the import of this briefer paſſage. The meaning of the Greek word, tranſlated *ſigns*, no ſingle word in our language is capable of conveying. Σημειον ſignifies any thing which happens contrary to the uſual courſe of events[25]: accordingly the clauſe may be thus rendered, *and then that which is extraordinary ſhall be in the ſun, and in the moon, and in the ſtars.* When *the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*, great and extraordinary wants ſhall take place in the antichriſtian monarchies and ariſtocracies of the world; or, in other words, they ſhall be overturned.

*Then will there be—upon the earth diſtreſs of nations, with perplexity.* Since εθνων is uſed both here and in the laſt verſe, why in one inſtance it has been tranſlated *gentiles*, and in the other nations, it were difficult to ſay. But whatever arbitrary diſtinction the tranſlator might intend to introduce, it is unreaſonable to ſuppoſe,

After this note was written, I was gratified by meeting with a coincidence of opinion in the works of Mede. This paſſage he twice quotes (p. 910, 920) in the ſame manner as tranſlated by Mr. Wakefield; and in one of his letters ſays, 'the copulative και verſe 25 και εσται σημεια &c.) 'is to be taken after the Hebrew manner *ordinative*, for *tum, deinde*, 'which you know is frequent in ſcripture, *then ſhall be ſigns.*'

It is in conformity to this tranſlation, that St. Mark ſays, in the parallel place (xiii. 24), *in thoſe days, after that tribulation, the ſun ſhall be darkened, &c.*

[24] See ch. xxii.

[25] This is the proper ſenſe of σημειον in the New Teſtament. Accordingly between σημειον and τερας, lexicographers, with Theophylact and Ammonius of Alexandria at their head, point out the following diſtinction: the former expreſſes an event, which is extraordinary and unuſual, but agreeable to the order of nature; the latter ſignifies that which is ſupernatural and miraculous. It is perhaps ſuperfluous for me to add, that in the lexicons σημειον is rendered *oſtentum*, and (as the reader may find by turning to Littleton) *oſtentum* ſignifies that, which is extraordinary, and which betokens ſomething to come. The latter idea, however, is not always attached to the word.

that

that the word does not, in both places, carry a uniformity of import. In the original, Και επι της γης συνοχη εθνων εν απωρια, a comma ought, I think, to be placed after συνοχη, and the right rendering of the words will then be, *and upon the earth diſtreſs, with perplexity of the Gentiles.* As *the ſun*, and *the moon*, *the ſtars*, and *the ſea*, are ſymbolic expreſſions, to annex a diſſimilar interpretation to the word *earth* would be to incur the charge of inconſiſtency. Dr. Lancaſter, indeed, obſerves, that 'it is the *uſual* ſtyle of the ſcriptures to re-'preſent ſuch men as are ſinners, idolaters, out of the 'covenant of grace, or at leaſt apoſtates from it, by the 'names of *earth*, *inhabitants of the earth*, and the like.' The clauſe, then, imports, that upon the antichriſtian part of the world there will be great diſtreſs, and that theſe heathens, as they may deſervedly be ſtyled, ſhall be perplexed, and thrown into the moſt nice and critical ſituations.

But our Lord does not merely apprize us of the fact, that, immediately previous to the downfal of oppreſſive government, the antichriſtian inhabitants of the world will be involved in ſingular diſtreſs; but he alſo acquaints us how this diſtreſs ſhall be cauſed. *And upon the earth diſtreſs, with perplexity of the Gentiles; the ſea and the waves roaring*; which latter clauſe, as Dr. Prieſtley on the paſſage remarks, is 'a figurative de-'ſcription of convulſions among nations by war, &c. [26]' Wars ſhall happen, which ſhall ſhatter the power of ariſtocracy and of deſpotiſm. Nor is the information the leſs ſure and leſs to be depended upon, on account of its being figuratively expreſſed; for theſe ſymbols carry along with them a fixed and determinate meaning. '*Many waters* [27],' ſays Dr. Lancaſter, in his dictionary,

[26] Prieſtley's Harmony. See the ſame obſervations in Wolzogenius.

[27] See pages 55 and 56.

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'upon the account of their noiſe, number, and diſ-'order, and confuſion of their waves are the ſymbols of 'nations;' and *ſea troubled and tumultuous* denotes a collection of men in motion and war.' It is added, *men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the earth.* Fear ſhall ſeize upon the hearts of many men. All thoſe whoſe claims are at variance with the welfare and the rights of mankind (and, alas, they are a numerous body) ſhall tremble at thoſe events which are tranſacting in the European world[28], and ~~behold~~ their approaching downfal with the moſt timorous ſolicitude.

We learn, then, that the calamities which are to be looked for with ſo much anxiety are to be inflicted upon the worldly-minded and the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom; and therefore the *men*, whoſe *hearts are ſaid* to *fail them for fear*, appear not to be mankind in general, but thoſe in particular, who ſtand in the different ranks of the antichriſtian party[29].

The recently illuſtrated paſſages are completely in uniſon with the more detailed accounts of the apocalypſe.

[28] The reader will here be ready to exclaim, why do you interpret *the earth*, the European world; in the laſt verſe annexing to it a ſymbolic, and in this a literal, ſenſe? But this difficulty will vaniſh, when it is replied, that the word tranſlated *earth*, in the former verſe, is γη; in the latter οικεμενη. Of theſe the one eaſily admits an emblematic meaning; whilſt the other is altogether a ſtranger to it. That οικεμενη ſignifies the countries of the Roman empire, and the principal part of Europe which are included under it, is plain from ch. ii. v. 1. of our evangeliſt, *there went out a decree from Cæſar Auguſtus, that all the world* (απασαν την οικεμενην) *ſhould be taxed.*

[29] Should the *earth*, however, be thought to denote in v. 25 mankind without diſtinction, ſtill will the paſſage admit of an eaſy interpretation. In the conflict between many of the kings, and between the people, of the world, not a few of the latter will naturally be awake to uneaſy apprehenſions, leſt untoward events ſhould ariſe, and lead to the firmer rivetting of their chains, inſtead of their being broken upon the heads of their oppreſſors.

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By our Lord, and by his favourite apoſtle, the ſame events are repreſented as antecedent to the proper eſtabliſhment of his kingdom,—*general wars among the nations*,—*and the overthrow of the antichriſtian monarchies*. Thoſe of his future diſciples, who ſhall be witneſſes of thoſe occurrences, he has accordingly inſtructed, that they ſhould pay a marked attention to them, as to THE SIGNS AND FORERUNNERS OF THE COMING OF HIS KINGDOM.

Having declared that the *hearts* of many *ſhall fail them for fear*, the founder of our divine religion immediately adds the reaſon: *for*, ſays he, *the powers of heaven* [30] *ſhall be ſhaken* [31]. The ſcorching luminaries of the political univerſe [32] will be violently agitated, and at length removed out of their places; or, to quit the figures of the prophet, all the oppreſſive governments and ariſtocracies of the world will be ſhaken to their foundations and aboliſhed. And THEN will the religion of Jeſus operate with its full power, and have a glorious ſpread.

*And when theſe things begin to come to paſs, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh*, or, as Mr. Wakefield tranſlates, *for your deliverance is at hand*. Seeing Chriſtianity, ſtripped of all falſe appendages, and producing its proper effects, you will be converted to it, and will no longer be a people, oppreſſed and deſpiſed. And it is not thoſe only of *your nation*, but thoſe alſo of *your faith* (i. e. the Chriſtian), whoſe *deliverance* will be accompliſhed [33]. From

[30] 'To *ſhake the heavens*,' ſays Daubuz, 'ſignifies to overthrow the 'throne of kingdoms.' On the Apoc. p. 291.

[31] In the commentary of Wolzogenius it may be ſeen, that the true interpretation of this paſſage had not entirely eſcaped him.

[32] '*Heaven and earth* ſignify a Political Univerſe.' Dr. Lancaſter.

[33] 'The reſtoration of the Jews, and the fall of Antichriſt, ſhall happen about the ſame time,' Bp. Newton, vol. III. p. 391.

that

that preſſure of evil, which they are to ſuffer during the aſcendancy of Antichriſt, Chriſtians as well as Jews will be liber ted.

Since *the kingdom of God*, and *the kingdom of Heaven*, are expreſſions, which have been uniformly employed by modern writers to deſignate a future world, the paſſage which follows has, by the unlettered reader, been generally miſapprehended. I copy it, as explained by Dr. Sykes. ‘ *As when trees ſhoot forth, ye ſee and know* ‘ *of your own ſelves that ſummer is now nigh at hand*; ‘ *ſo likewiſe, when ye ſee theſe things come to paſs*[34].’ ‘ *know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand:* that ‘ it will then be at its full growth and ſtate of perfection[35].’ This judicious divine has accordingly proved at length, that thoſe Jewiſh phraſes, THE KINGDON OF GOD[36], and THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN[37], which ſo often occur in the evangeliſts, are equivalent to *the kingdom of the Meſſiah*, and ſignify the diſpenſation of the goſpel as preached and practiſed upon earth, and not a ſtate of future exiſtence, nor were ever thought to do ſo by the diſciples of our Lord[38]. To a Jew, indeed, theſe phraſes were

[34] ‘ As if he had ſaid, as of yourſelves you are apprized, that the ‘ unfolding of the leaves in trees is the forerunner of ſummer; ſo alſo ‘ know, that theſe ſigns are the forerunners of your deliverance.’ Wolzogenius.

[35] Eſſ. on the Truth of the Chr. Rel. p. 56.

[36] i. e. a kingdom or diſpenſation ſet up by God.

[37] It is called, ſays biſhop Kidder, ‘ *the kingdom of heaven*, it being ſet up, as Daniel expreſſeth it, by *the God of heaven.*’ Demonſtr. of the Meſſiah, vol. III. p. 388.

[38] P. 29—78. That they bear this ſenſe may be ſeen in the works of Mede (vol. I. p. 134), in biſhop Chandler's *Defence of Chriſtianity from the Prophecies* (p. 101), and in the commentaries of Macknight, bp. Pearce, and Wolzogenius; and will undeniably appear from the allegation of two or three inſtances. Addreſſing himſelf as to the ſcribes and phariſees, Jeſus

were familiar. Thus Dr Kidder aſſures us, that the Chaldee paraphraſt, like the writers of the New Teſtament, ſometimes denominated the kingdom of the Meſſiah, *the kingdom of God*[39]. Accordingly, ſays Dr. Sykes, 'the Jews were ſo well acquainted with the 'meaning of this expreſſion, and were ſo well apprized 'of a kingdom which God had reſolved in his due time 'to ſet up, that as often as Jeſus talked of *the kingdom* '*of Heaven*, or, *of God*; neither the people, nor their 'rulers, ever offered to aſk him the meaning of that 'phraſe[40].'

Jeſus ſaid (Mat. xxiii. 13), *ye ſhut up* THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN *againſt men: for ye neither go in yourſelves, neither ſuffer ye them that are entering to go in.* That their power reached to a future world, that the virtuous they could exclude from being admitted into the manſions of eternity, cannot for a moment be ſuppoſed. The meaning, then, plainly is: you will not yourſelves enter into the goſpel-diſpenſation, nor will you omit to practiſe various expedients to preclude others from the participation of its privileges. That Chriſt did *not caſt out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils*, was objected againſt him by his inveterate enemies, the phariſees (Mat. xii. 24, 28); and a part of his reply was, *but if I caſt out devils by the ſpirit of God, then* THE KINGDOM OF GOD *is come unto you.* The interpretation is obvious, and is partly given in the words of Dr. Sykes: but if I perform miraculous works by the divine aſſiſtance, it is evident then, that 'the kingdom of the Meſſiah is come in your times: and the miracles 'done by me confirm that I am no impoſtor.' One other inſtance ſhall be alleged, as it is a famous text, which has, by the advocates of the Roman ſee, been greatly perverted. When Jeſus ſaid unto Peter (Mat. xvi. 9), *I will give unto thee the keys of* THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; his meaning was, ſays Dr. Sykes, I will cauſe that you, the firſt of all the apoſtles, ſhall, by preaching, *open* the goſpel diſpenſation both to the Gentiles and to the Jews. Within the narrow pale of the Jewiſh church religious privileges were no longer to be ſhut up and confined. They were to be unlocked to mankind in general. Accordingly we read in the Acts of the extraordinary ſucceſs of Peter's preaching; and that he did, in fact, bring into the church of Chriſt the *firſt* converts, and great numbers of them, as well from the Gentile world, as from the Jews.

[39] Dem. of the Meſſ. vol. III. p. 388.

[40] On the Tr. of the Chr. Rel. p. 29.

But

But a part of the words of Jeſus ſhall again be cited. *When ye ſee and know theſe things come to paſs, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand*[41]. Of theſe words the full import appears to be; when ye perceive that the antichriſtian monarchies and ariſtocracies of the world are falling to pieces, be aſſured, that what is the proper Meſſiah's kingdom is then approaching. Hitherto the way has only been prepared for this kingdom[42]. Hitherto has been the reign, not of genuine Chriſtianity, but of antichriſtianiſm. This paſſage ought not lightly to be paſſed over, for, if duly conſidered, it will be ſufficient to evince, that Chriſt could be ſpeaking of the commencement of no other period, than that happy ſtate of the world, which is ſo largely deſcribed by his beloved diſciple, as certainly to be eſtabliſhed, and certainly to continue for a very long duration.

*Verily I ſay unto you, this generation ſhall not paſs away, till all be fulfilled.* This clauſe of the prediction has, I conceive, not merely been generally miſapprehended, but moreover falſely tranſlated; and this is the opinion of men, who hold the firſt rank in ſcriptural criticiſm, namely of Mede and Wolfius and Dr. Sykes[43]. To the deſtruction of Jeruſalem a Mr. Hayne had applied this part of our Lord's prophecy. Hear a part of Mr. Mede's reply. 'I anſwer, firſt, while you endeavour in this manner to eſtabliſh a ground for the

[41] That is, ſays Mede, that the millennium is at hand. p. 934.

[42] 'By Chriſt's kingdom,' ſays Dr. J. Edwards, 'is ſometimes meant 'that peculiar and ſpecial time of his reigning,—when Chriſtianity ſhall 'arrive at its height, when the Church ſhall be in its meridian.—It may 'be this is that *kingdom of God*, of which, and *the things appertaining to it*, 'our Saviour diſcourſed to his apoſtles before he left the world, Acts i. 3.' *Hiſt. of all the Diſpenſations of Religion*, vol. II. p. 649.

[43] Other reſpectable critics, who have maintained the ſame opinion, it is alſo eaſy to name, as Brenius (in loc.) and Markius (in *Exercit. Exegeticis* p 560).

'firſt

'first coming of Chriſt, you bereave the church of thoſe 'principal paſſages of the ſcripture, whereon ſhe hath 'always grounded her faith of *the ſecond coming*. Se-'condly, you ground all this upon the *ambiguity* of the 'word *generation*, whereas γενεα ſignifies not only ætas, 'but *gens*[44], *natio*, *progenies*, and ſo ought to be here 'taken; viz.—the nation of the Jews ſhould not *periſh*, 'till all theſe things were fulfilled. For ſo ſignifies 'παρελθη in the Hebrew notion, as you may ſee even in 'the verſe following.—Chryſoſtom among the anci-'ents[45], and Flacius Illyricus (a man well ſkilled in the 'ſtyle of ſcripture) among the moderns, and thoſe who 'follow them, might have admoniſhed others to take 'the word γενεα in this acceptation, rather than by turn-'ing it *ætas* or *ſeculum*, to put this prophecy in little-'eaſe, and the whole harmony of ſcripture out of frame, 'by I know not what confuſed interpretation[46].' I only add, that Dr. Sykes declares himſelf the more confirmed in this tranſlation 'from the remarkable, and indeed, un-'paralleled, *preſervation* of the Jews in the midſt of 'hatred and continual perſecutions[47].' The meaning then is, the Jewiſh nation ſhall aſſuredly ſubſiſt as a diſtinct people, till *all* that has been previouſly mentioned ſhall have been *fulfilled*, not only during the moſt corrupt period of the church, but until the antichriſtian governments of the world ſhall have been diſſolved, and the religion of Jeſus ſhall have begun to ſhine with its natural luſtre. And what is there in the exiſting circum-

[44] Accordingly Beza, in the Goſpels, repeatedly renders γενεα by the word *gens*. Vorſtius (in his *Philol. Sacr.* c. 12) ſays, 'γενεα PROPRIE 'genus, *progeniem*, *familiam* ſignificat. Deinde et την γενεαν *generationem*.'

[45] Indeed by the fathers in general, who muſt be admitted to have been competent judges of the meaning of the word, γενεα was not underſtood as ſignifying the generation then living. Some perſons, however, there were, who held this opinion; but ſays Maldonatus, Origen entitles them *ſimplices*.

[46] P. 919.

[47] On the Tr. of the Chr. Rel. p. 61.

ſtances of the world, or of the Jews, which contradicts this aſſertion, or renders it incapable of being verified?

The language of Chriſt is expreſſed with all poſſible ſtrength. *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away: but my word ſhall not paſs away.* That is, ſays bp Newton, 'Heaven and earth ſhall ſooner or more eaſily paſs 'away; the frame of the univerſe ſhall ſooner or more 'eaſily be diſſolved, than my words not be fulfilled[48].' And ſurely the prediction of the Jews remaining as a ſeparate people was a fact of ſufficient importance, and ſufficiently intereſting to the perſons whom our Lord was addreſſing, to account why he annexed to it an affirmation thus ſtriking and ſolemn.

*And take heed to yourſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting, and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life, and ſo that day come upon you unawares.* To excite an habitual vigilance in Chriſtians of every age appears to have been the primary aim of this admonition. From the manner in which our Lord introduces the expreſſion, *that day*, it is, however, evident, that he is ſtill ſpeaking of the ſame period, of which he had been treating in the preceding verſes. The verſe, then, muſt be explained ſo as to harmonize with the reſt, and accordingly may, in this manner, be paraphraſed. Beware of falling into habits of intemperance and extravagance. Be cautious of being ſo beſotted by ſordid intereſt and the cares of this life; that you ſhould in conſequence engage in criminal purſuits and criminal com-

[48] 'It is a common figure of ſpeech in the oriental languages, to ſay of 'two things that the one ſhall be and the other ſhall not be, when the 'meaning is only, the one ſhall happen ſooner or more eaſily than the 'other. As in this inſtance of our Saviour.' Bp. Newton, vol. II. p. 318. But St. Luke expreſſes himſelf, on a like occaſion, without a figure (xvi. 17), *it is eaſier for heaven and earth to paſs than one tittle of the law to fail.*

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binations, adverſe to the general happineſs of mankind, and to the practice of Chriſtianity, and thus ſhould not *diſcern the Signs of the Times*, nor perceive the approach of that momentous period, when the way ſhall be prepared for the eſtabliſhment of that religion *in ſpirit and in truth*, and thoſe, who uphold what is antichriſtian and oppreſſive, ſhall be ſubjected to the heavieſt and moſt unlooked for calamities. *For as a ſnare ſhall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth.* When that period arrives, and unexpectedly will it arrive, thoſe, who obſtinately cling to antichriſtian abuſes, ſhall be deſtined to fall a ſnare to the devices themſelves have planned.

In the parallel chapter of Matthew (xxiv), in v. 41, 42, and 43 it is ſaid, *Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the houſe had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have ſuffered his houſe to be broken up. Therefore be ye alſo ready: for, in ſuch an hour as ye think not, the ſon of man cometh.* Bp Newton obſerves, that 'Chriſt is ſaid 'to come upon any notable and illuſtrious manifeſtation 'of his providence[49];' and accordingly the context here directs us to underſtand his *coming* of that ſplendid diſplay of juſtice, when, as we are told in this chapter, the ſymbolic ſun, and moon, and ſtars will all be darkened.

Strongly is this interpretation of theſe three verſes confirmed by the manner in which a parallel paſſage is applied by St. John. In the war of Armageddon, the antichriſtian kings are to experience an irreparable defeat; and, in the account of this war, the following caution is inſerted; *Behold, I come as a thief. Bleſſed is he that watcheth*[50]. Here, ſays Daubuz, Chriſt himſelf is plainly repreſented as ſpeaking. With a reference to the

[49] Vol. III. p. 346. [50] XVI. 15.

exhortation of Chriſt, which has juſt been quoted from Matthew, I cite alſo the following paſſage from Dr. Hartley. 'How near the diſſolution of the preſent go-'vernments, generally or particularly, may be, would be 'great raſhneſs to affirm. Chriſt will come in this ſenſe 'alſo, *as a thief in the night*[51].'

On *the order of time*, in which the events predicted by our Lord are to follow each other, ſomewhat may be farther noted. *The powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken.* The antichriſtian powers ſhall be removed from the political univerſe. *And* THEN *ſhall they ſee the ſon of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.* And quickly afterwards the religion of Jeſus ſhall have a glorious prevalence. AND WHEN THESE THINGS BEGIN TO COME TO PASS; when a part of the oppreſſive governments of the world ſhall be deſtroyed (probably thoſe of this character in Europe), and the Chriſtian religion is in conſequence *beginning* to produce its natural effects; THEN *look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh.* But Matthew ſays, that *the ſun ſhall be darkened* AFTER *the tribulation of thoſe days.* What then is the concluſion we draw from the compariſon of the two paſſages? Since from Matthew we gather, that the tribulation and perſecution of the Jews are entirely to ceaſe, before the antichriſtian governments of the world ſhall be completely darkened; and ſince from Luke we learn, that what is called their *deliverance* is an event ſubſequent to the commencement of the deſtruction of theſe governments; it is probable, that an interval of time will elapſe, between their being tolerated and freed from all conſiderable oppreſſions, and their return to their own land and acceptance of the goſpel of

[51] On Man, vol. II. p. 368.

Jeſus.

Jeſus. To the expectations of reaſon this, indeed, is perfectly conſonant.

From the explication which has been offered of our Lord's predictions, it will, I hope, appear, that however awful and terrifying may be the aſpect which they wear, when firſt ſurveyed, and however they may have been thought to threaten human kind in general; yet that they do, when narrowly inſpected and juſtly interpreted, ceaſe to afford ground of alarm to the philoſophic philanthropiſt and genuine Chriſtian; though they are, indeed, fitted to communicate a degree of ſerioufneſs and ſolicitude to every mind, and are calculated to inſpire with the moſt painful reflexions and the deepeſt diſmay all the ſons of uſurpation and of plunder, however elevated their power, however ancient their claims, and however artfully they may have ſheltered themſelves under the *forms* of law or the *profeſſion* of Chriſtianity. But perſons of this deſcription regard not the divine oracles. It were well, if, in the ears of ſuch, the tremendous words of the apoſtle Paul were loudly ſounded. *Beware, therefore, leſt that come upon you, which is ſpoken of in the prophets: Behold, ye deſpiſers, and wonder and periſh; for I work a work in your days, a work, which ye ſhall in no wiſe believe, though a man declare it unto you*[52]. Theſe words 'St. Paul applied' (I am now quoting from bp Hurd) 'to the unbelieving Jews; of whoſe mockery, 'and of whoſe fate, ye have heard what their own hiſto-'rian witneſſeth[53]: and if we equal their obdurate ſpirit, '*that* prophecy may clearly be *applied*, and no man can

[52] Acts xiii. 40, 41.

[53] Vol. II. p. 228. 'Joſephus tells us, that, in the laſt dreadful ruin 'of his unhappy countrymen, it was familiar with them, *to make a* '*jeſt of divine things, and to deride, as ſo many ſenſeleſs tales and juggling* '*impoſtures, the ſacred oracles of their prophets*; though they were then 'fulfilling before their eyes, and even upon themſelves.' Hurd, p. 226.

ſay, that it was not *intended* to be applied to ourſelves.—'Let us, then, on a principle of ſelf-love, if not of pi-'ety, *keep the ſayings of this book*[54], concerning THE 'MAN OF SIN. From many appearances, the ap-'pointed time for THE FULL COMPLETION of them 'may not be very remote. And it becomes our pru-'dence to take heed, that we be not found in the num-'ber of thoſe, to whom that awful queſtion is propoſed, '*How is it, that ye do not diſcern the ſigns of this time*[55]?' This cautious and courtly prelate here aſſumes an apoſtolic plainneſs; and ſeems, for a moment, to be forgetful of his epiſcopal ſtation, and to diveſt himſelf of his natural character. To many of thoſe, with whom his lordſhip aſſociates, a more ſuitable leſſon of caution and of advice he could not have poſſibly offered.

My next quotation is from another claſſical ſcholar, who has likewiſe contemplated the ſigns of the times with an attentive eye, and who alſo was educated in the boſom of the church and in the univerſity of Cambridge; but whoſe principles of conduct have been perfectly oppoſite to thoſe of the biſhop of Worceſter. 'There is,' ſays Mr. Wakefield, 'a ſeaſon, when inactivity were a 'crime; and public admonition, even at the hazard of 'perſonal comforts, riſes into an indiſpenſable obliga-'tion; to thoſe at leaſt, who are deſirous that their maſ-'ter ſhould not be *aſhamed of* them at his *ſecond coming*. 'I am expecting with trembling ſolicitude, amidſt the 'inceſſant occupations of a literary life, that alarming 'cataſtrophe, which *the ſigns of the times* indicate, in 'my mind, to be rapidly approaching[56].'

[54] *Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep thoſe things which are written therein.* Rev. i. 3.

[55] Luke xii. 56.

[56] Spirit of Chriſtianity compared with the Spirit of the Times, p. 26.

To

To the reaſons which have before been ſtated[57], to account why the preceding expoſition of the prophecy of Jeſus has not been embraced or noticed by any of our Engliſh commentators, it may be added, that moſt of them have been too contracted in their inquiries, and have been little careful to collect the light which has been ſtruck out by foreign writers on the ſubject: and that their vernacular verſion, upon which too implicit confidence has been placed, is, in ſome important points, erroneous.

[57] In p. 396.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE COMMON INTERPRETATIONS OF CHRIST'S PROPHECY.

HAVING endeavoured to give a rational and conſiſtent interpretation of the whole of the latter diviſion of our Lord's prophetic diſcourſe; I ſhall, in order to furniſh the reader with a yet farther preſumption of its truth, briefly allege ſome objections, which have forcibly ſtruck my own mind, and appear completely to overthrow the two other hypotheſes; one of which would explain it of the end of the world and the final judgment; whilſt the other would confine it to the period, when the capital of Judea was captured and deſtroyed. Of theſe two interpretations, the firſt has obtained the greateſt number of advocates[1]; and with that I ſhall begin.

[1] See Creſſener's Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. p. 81.

It is to the falſe tranſlation of τῦ αἰωνος, as ſignifying *the world*, that its prevalence may in a great degree be attributed. This tranſlation has the patronage of archbiſhop Tillotſon. After our Lord's diſciples had inquired, *when ſhall theſe things be*, i. e. when ſhall the temple be deſtroyed, to this inquiry 'they ſubjoined,' ſays the archbiſhop, 'another; *and what ſhall be the ſign of thy* '*coming?* that is, to judgment, *and of the end of the* '*world?* which, in all probability, was added to the 'former, becauſe they ſuppoſed that the one was preſently 'to follow the other[2].' 'The diſciples,' ſays Matt. Henry in a more poſitive tone, 'had confounded the de-'ſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the end of the world, which 'was built upon a miſtake, as if the temple muſt needs 'ſtand as long as the world ſtands.' It is true, they *were* miſtaken[3]. But *this* is an error, from which, I am convinced, they ſteered perfectly clear. 'They muſt,' as Dr. Macknight obſerves, 'certainly have known, that 'Solomon's building had been deſtroyed by the Baby-'lonians, though erected by the appointment of God, 'and dignified with the Schechinah, or viſible ſymbol 'of the Divine preſence. If ſo, they could hardly think 'that a temple ſo much inferior, both in the greatneſs of 'its privileges, and the beauty of its fabric, was not to 'periſh, unleſs in the deſolation of the world. In the ſe-'cond place, according to this interpretation of the pro-'phecy, Jeſus hath declared, with the greateſt ſolemnity, 'a thing which no perſon could be ignorant of. For 'who did not know, that with the world Herod's temple, 'and all other buildings, ſhould crumble into pieces?'

'If,' ſays Mr. Niſbett, 'our tranſlation is admitted to 'be right, the diſciples not only introduce a queſtion, 'which has no connexion with the occaſion which gave

[2] Serm. 96. [3] See p. 531, 532.

'riſe

'rise to it, but which was directly opposed to their well-'known sentiments. So far were they from conceiving 'the end of the world to be at hand, in the strict and li-'teral sense of the expression, that they became the fol-'lowers of Jesus from a firm persuasion, that he was the 'Messiah, who should reign gloriously over them[4].' And it may be added, that the apostles could not have forgotten, what the repeated prophetic declarations of Daniel necessarily imply, that the kingdom of Christ to be established on earth should be of very long duration[5].

*Jerusalem*, says the holy founder of our religion (Luk. xxi. 24), *shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*; and, two or three verses farther, *when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh.* That the first of these passages relates to the restoration of the Jews, is plain; and that the second has a reference to the same event, there can be little room to doubt. To suppose that all the latter part of our Lord's prophecy respects the dissolution of the world, is to suppose, that he has solemnly foretold the future deliverance of the Jews, and that this solemn declaration shall never be fulfilled. Such is the dilemma, to which the advocates of this opinion are reduced.

*Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled*, is the affirmation of Christ, as given in our common version. It is on the sense, here annexed to γενεὰ, and on the literal interpretation of other of his words, that an artful, and seemingly formidable, objection against the truth of our Lord's predictions has been founded. The quotation that follows is from a writer, who approaches the believer with the mask of a

[4] Illustr. of Passages in the Epist. of the New Test. &c. p. 15.

[5] See Dan. II. 44. vii. 14, 18, 27.

friend,

friend, at the ſame time that he breathes the moſt determined hoſtility againſt the religion of Jeſus, and ſeizes every opportunity of ſilently aiming a blow againſt the evidences of its divine original. 'Thoſe who underſtood 'in their literal ſenſe the diſcourſes of Chriſt himſelf 'were,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'OBLIGED to expect the ſe-'cond and glorious coming of the ſon of man in the 'clouds, before that *generation* was totally extinguiſhed, 'which had beheld his humble condition upon earth, 'and which might ſtill be witneſs to the calamities of the 'Jews under Veſpaſian or Hadrian. The revolution of 'ſeventeen centuries has inſtructed us not to preſs too 'cloſely the myſterious language of prophecy and reve-'lation; but as long as, for wiſe purpoſes, this error was 'permitted to ſubſiſt in the church, it was productive of 'the moſt ſalutary effects on the faith and practice of 'Chriſtians[6].' But the lapſe of time, I conceive, furniſhes a very different leſſon. It inſtructs us, not that the figurative language of prophecy has been preſſed too cloſely, but that it has not been preſſed cloſe enough.

Not very differently ſpeaks a doctor of the church, whoſe conceſſion will probably be regarded as rather extraordinary, when it is conſidered that it proceeded from the pulpit of one of our univerſities. Our Saviour, ſays Dr. Thomas Edwards, in the xxivth ch. of Matthew, 'deciſively foretells, that the *generation* then exiſting 'ſhould not be totally extinguiſhed, till it had witneſſed 'his ſecond and glorious appearance in the clouds of 'heaven. Yet the records of hiſtory *do not* authorize us 'to believe, that this prediction was accompliſhed at the 'deſtruction of Jeruſalem[7].'

[6] Decl. and Fall of the Roman Emp. vol. II. p. 301.

[7] Sermon on the Predictions of the Apoſtles concerning the End of the World, preached before the Univerſity of Cambridge, 1790. p. 19.

And

And after profeſſedly inveſtigating the import of various paſſages relevant to this ſubject, and noticing the ſpecious, and, as he conceives, unanſwerable objection of Mr. Gibbon; he terminates his enquiry with declaring, that 'it becomes the antagoniſt of our hiſtorian moſt 'earneſtly to conſider, whether the real intereſts of Chriſ-'tianity would not be more eſſentially promoted by *con-'ceding* the objection to his adverſary, than by vainly at-'tempting to remove it[8].' But happily the attempt is not vain. The interpretation of our Lord's prophecy, which has been given in the preſent work, completely wreſts from the hands of the infidel this powerful objection, againſt the truth of Chriſtianity, and the veracity of Jeſus as a prophet.

What our Lord ſays (Mark xiii. 27), *and then ſhall he ſend his angels, and ſhall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermoſt part of the earth to the uttermoſt part of heaven*, will be explained in a future chapter; and I will here only obſerve, that this paſſage, which has been triumphantly urged as pointing to the day of judgment, and which, at the firſt ſight, certainly does afford more countenance to that idea than any other verſe in the whole of the diſcourſe, is in truth *inapplicable* to that event. For, at that awful period, not *the elect* only, but all men whatſoever, will, it may be expected, be ſummoned before the tribunal of Chriſt.

Another portion alſo of the prophecy, which has been thought moſt favourable to the hypotheſis I am conſidering, *and they ſhall ſee the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven*, will, if traced to its ſource, be found altogether adverſe to it. For the expreſſion was borrowed by our Lord from the viith ch. of Daniel[9], where

[8] P. 35.

[9] We may, ſays Mede, take 'this for a ſure ground, that this expreſſion 'of *the Son of man's coming in the clouds of heaven*, ſo often inculcated in the

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it unqueſtionably relates not to the diſſolution of the world, but to the commencement of the millennium. It might have been expected, that this circumſtance would, of itſelf, have furniſhed the commentators with a clue, capable of guiding them in their reſearches, and that it would have led them to fix on the true period, to which our Lord's prophecy pointed.

The interpretation that follows from Matthew Henry is totally repugnant to reaſon and probability. In the 24th and 25th verſes of the xiiith ch. of Mark, Chriſt 'foretells the *final diſſolution* of the preſent frame and 'fabric of the world: even of that part of it which ſeems 'leaſt liable to change, even the upper part; *the ſun ſhall* 'be darkened, *and the moon ſhall* no more *give her* 'light; for they ſhall be quite out-ſhone by the glory of 'the Son of man, Iſa. xxiv. 23. The ſtars of heaven, 'that from the beginning had kept their place, and regu-'lar motion, ſhall fall as leaves in autumn; and *the powers* 'that are *in heaven*, the heavenly bodies, the fixed ſtars, '*ſhall be ſhaken*[10].' They are ſuch interpretations as this,

'New Teſtament, is taken from and hath reference to the prophecy of 'Daniel, being no where elſe found in the Old Teſtament. As our Sa-'viour alſo calls himſelf ſo frequently *the Son of man*, becauſe Daniel ſo 'called him,—and that we might look for the accompliſhment of what is 'there propheſied of in him. It was not in vain, that when our Saviour 'quoted the prophecy of Daniel, he added, he *that readeth him, let him un-'derſtand.*' p. 934. See a ſimilar obſervation of Dr. Sykes mentioned in p. 529.

[10] Dr. Pococke, in his Commentary on a ſimilar paſſage in Joel, ch. iii. v. 15, where it is ſaid, *the ſun and the moon ſhall be darkened, and the ſtars ſhall withdraw their ſhining*, ſays, 'Jerom thinks the words ſo to ſound, 'as if thoſe heavenly bodies, not able to behold the ſorrows of that day 'of God's judgments ſpoken of, and the cruel torments inflicted on them 'that ſhall then periſh, ſhould even out of fear to themſelves withdraw 'their preſence. He ſeems to refer it to the dreadful day of the laſt judg-'ment.' That it *cannot* point to that day is plain from the temporal bleſſings, which are promiſed, in the ſubſequent verſes, to the children of Iſrael.

and

and that other which is cited from Jerom in a note, which have afforded ſome colour of plauſibility to the groundleſs declaration of Thomas Paine, a declaration on which he lays much ſtreſs (in his *Age of Reaſon*), that the belief of Chriſtianity, and the belief of a plurality of worlds, are altogether irreconcileable. 'What are we to think,' aſks this celebrated writer, 'of the Chriſtian ſyſtem of 'faith, that forms itſelf upon the idea of only one world, 'and that of no greater extent, as is before ſhewn, than '25,000 miles[11]?' Certainly if this narrow, unphiloſophic idea formed really a part of the Chriſtian ſyſtem, this circumſtance would throw over it very ſtrong ſuſpicions. But the fact is, that the idea ought to be ſeparated from it, and that Chriſtianity ſtands perfectly clear of the charge[12].

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[11] P. 39—46. In animadverting on the manner in which Mr. Paine has ſpoken of the book of Revelation, Mr. Wakefield ſays, 'that the random 'fiction of a diſtempered brain ſhould be marked with ſuch characters of 'conſiſtency and truth, as are found on the face of the apocalypſe, is to 'me perfectly inconceivable: not much unlike a ſuſpicion, that the fabric 'of St. Peter's at Rome was not the work of architectural ingenuity, but 'thrown up in its preſent form by an earthquake or a volcano.' Exam. of *the Age of Reaſon*, 2d ed. p. 45.

[12] In truth, the ſtudy of revelation, by teaching us, that we are beings deſigned for immortality tends to enlarge our views with reſpect to the probable deſtination of many of the planetary orbs, which revolve either round our own or more diſtant ſuns. To ſuppoſe that the particular *ſtate* of being and happineſs, or the particular *place* of reſidence, to which virtuous men will be tranſported at their departure from this world, will for ever remain the ſame, is, I conceive, an expectation contracted and unphiloſophic, though it has, indeed, been frequently countenanced by the declarations of divines. In the chain of exiſtence, man, it may be preſumed, conſtitutes no very elevated link. The diſtinctions of being, which intervene between man and the oyſter, numerous as they are, it is likely, are ſurpaſſed in number by thoſe which ſeparate man from the Deity. Is it credible, that an immortality ſhould be paſſed, on a ſingle ſpot of creation, or in a uniform routine of occupations? Is it not rather to be expected,

Had the diſcourſe of Jeſus been prophetic of the diſſolution of the world and of the day of Judgment, ſurely it might have been expected, that ſome notice ſhould have been taken in it of the reſurrection of the dead, of their being ſummoned before the bar of Chriſt, of the ſolemn ſentence there to be pronounced, and of the varying ſituations of felicity and wretchedneſs in which each individual ſhall then be placed. But to theſe momentous circumſtances there is no alluſion in the prophecy.

Bp Newton, Dr. Macknight, Mr. Niſbett, and ſome other modern writers, plainly diſcerning that this interpretation of our Lord's prophecy, as referring to the end of the world, is altogether untenable, have advanced another, which they flatter themſelves is more free from difficulties. The whole of it they explain as relating to the Jewiſh ſtate alone, and the ſubverſion of the Jewiſh capital and polity. As the interpretation they reject is principally grounded upon an erroneous tranſlation of αιων; in the ſame manner that which they have adopted derives its prime ſupport from the ambiguity of a ſingle word. But the argument, drawn from the equivocal meaning of γενεα, is ſpoken of by bp. Newton as if it

expected, that there will be a long ſucceſſion of ſtates and of worlds, in which improvements will gradually ſucceed to improvements, the faculties of the celeſtial inhabitants being more and more enlarged, and their proſpects becoming more and more extenſive? The promiſes of never-ending happineſs, which the New Teſtament promiſes to the virtuous, do then perfectly correſpond with thoſe magnificent ideas of the extent of ſpace, and the capaciouſneſs of the heavenly bodies, which the ſtudy of Aſtronomy ſuggeſts. The extreme brevity of the period of our continuance on earth, when contraſted with the boundleſs extent of eternity, bears, indeed, ſome analogy to the difference, which ſubſiſts between the immenſity of the material univerſe, and the comparative diminutiveneſs of the ſolar ſyſtem, which, to an eye placed in the centre of exiſtence, would appear but as a point, and, if annihilated, would be far from occaſioning any perceptible vacuity.

were

were decisive and irresistible. 'It is,' says he, 'to me a 'wonder *how any man can refer* part of the foregoing 'discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem, and part to 'the end of the world, or any other distant event, when 'it is said so positively here in the conclusion, *all these* '*things shall be fulfilled in this generation*[13].' In order to account for the wonder expressed by the prelate, and for his having sincerely felt it, candour might incline one to suppose, were the supposition admissible, that he had never heard of another signification having been annexed to the word. But since it was differently explained by the generality of the fathers, and, as has already been seen, by Brenius, and Mede, by Wolfius, Marckius and Dr. Sykes; and since the world was in possession of their respective writings, antecedently to the publication of the bishop's Dissertations, not to mention other well known authors who had noticed this explication of the word; it is not credible, that so diligent a student as his Lordship could have been ignorant of it, or of its having been advanced by critics of eminence.

The reader has already seen, that in Matthew the question of our Lord's disciples runs thus (and it is in Matthew that it is most fully expressed), *Tell us, when shall these things be*? i. e. the overthrow and demolition of the temple of Jerusalem. *And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the period?* That this passage contains two distinct questions, any person, I think, who views it with an impartial eye, will not fail of discerning; and it is therefore reasonable to believe, that our Lord would give to them distinct answers. As bp. Newton, however, clearly perceived, that if these premises were granted, the conclusion alleged would follow; he asserts, that 'the purport of the question plainly

[13] Vol. II. p. 317.

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'is when ſhall the deſtruction of Jeruſalem be, and what 'ſhall be the ſigns of it[14].'—But this is only part of the purport; and, I believe, this mode of limiting the queſtion is not more contrary to the opinion of the majority of interpreters, than it is at variance with the plain import of the words. 'They inquire of him,' ſays Chryſoſtom (in loc.), 'theſe two things, when ſhall theſe 'things be; namely the diſſolution of the temple, and 'what would be the ſign of his *coming*.'

Theophylact (in loc.) has a ſimilar paſſage. Indeed the learned Maldonatus (in his commentary printed in 1639) ſays, that *no one* denies, that the diſciples aſked of him diſtinct queſtions, reſpecting the deſtruction of the temple, and his *coming*. 'Chriſt, if I am capable of diſ-'cerning, any thing,' ſays Grotius, 'diſtinctly anſwers 'to *diſtinct* queſtions.—*The coming* of Chriſt many do 'not diſtinguiſh from the end of the world, being, I ap-'prehend, deceived by the ambiguity of the word; for it 'is moſt certain, that the word παρουσια [or *coming*] has a 'diverſity of acceptation.—I here interpret it, not of the 'Judgment, but of THE KINGDOM of the Meſſiah[15].'

'Our Saviour could not,' ſays Mr. Taylor of Portſ-'mouth, 'mean to tell his diſciples, that his *coming* 'would be *during that generation* and at *the time of the* '*deſolation*, becauſe he had aſſured them, that the time 'of his *coming* was known to God alone, verſe 36. Mar. 'xiii. 32[16].'

In the 24th v. of the xxiſt ch. of Luke our Lord foretells, that the Jews ſhall be led *into all nations*, and that the capital of their country ſhall continue in poſſeſſion of the Gentiles, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*. Now this period is not arrived, but *Jeruſalem* is ſtill *trod-*

[14] Vol. II. p. 214.
[15] Grot. in Mat. xxiv. 3.
[16] On *the Grand Apoſtacy*, p. 52.

*den*

*den down of the Gentiles:* and it is therefore reaſonable to ſuppoſe, from the manner in which the 9 ſubſequent verſes are introduced, that neither are the prophecies contained in *them* yet accompliſhed.

It is to Judea and Jeruſalem alone, that bp. Newton, and thoſe who follow his hypotheſis, of courſe apply the 25th verſe; which, according to the common tranſlation, runs thus, *and there ſhall be ſigns in the ſun, and in the moon, and in the ſtars; and upon the earth diſtreſs of nations, with perplexity; the ſea and the waves roaring.* But it would, I apprehend, require far greater talents than the bp. of Briſtol or any other prelate ever poſſeſſed to ſhew, how συνοχη εθνων, which ſignifies the diſtreſs of the nations or of the Gentiles, and οικουμενη, which denotes either the habitable earth or the wide extent of the Roman empire, can be applied, with any ſhew of reaſon and of probability, to the Jewiſh people and to the narrow limits of Paleſtine.

With what colour of plauſibility the encouragement of Jeſus to *look up and lift up* their *heads*, on account of an approaching deliverance, can be applied, as bp. Newton and his followers have applied it, to the period when Jeruſalem was deſtroyed, I am, alſo, altogether unable to diſcern. They cannot conſider it to have been addreſſed by our Lord to his diſciples in the character of Jews, ſince this was the æra, when the deſcendants of Abraham ſuſtained a complete overthrow, and encountered the moſt ſignal calamities: nor is it agreeable to the veracity of his prophetic character, to ſuppoſe him to have foretold, that, at the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, the hour of the deliverance of the Chriſtians would approach, though it is a well-known fact, that they were then expoſed, and for a *very* long period of years ſubſequent to that time continued to be expoſed, to all the frowns and inſults of the world; to the powerful enmity of the prieſthood, and to

the perſecutions of the civil magiſtrate, perſecutions cruel in their effects and frequent in their recurrence.

Our Lord ſays (I am now tranſcribing from Matthew), *and then ſhall appear the ſign of the ſon of man in heaven: and then ſhall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they ſhall ſee the ſon of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.* The expreſſion tranſlated, *all the tribes of the earth*, bp. Newton aſſerts, ſignifies merely the Jewiſh tribes, inhabiting the province of Judea; and he maintains, that this paſſage plainly ſignifies, 'that the deſtruction of Jeruſalem will be ſuch a remarkable inſtance of divine vengeance, ſuch a ſignal manifeſtation of Chriſt's power and glory, that all the Jewiſh tribes ſhall mourn[17].' But unfortunately for this interpretation, it is completely at variance with the teſtimony of civil and eccleſiaſtical hiſtory. So far from authorizing us to conclude, that the Jews diſcerned or acknowledged, in the deſtruction of their city, any diſplay of Chriſt's power; or that they attributed to their rejection of him, and the cruel death which he had received at their hands, the overthrow of their armies, their capital, and their polity; it informs us, that they ſtill inſulted the memory of their crucified Meſſiah, and ſtill remained hardened in infidelity.

Dr. Campbell, ſpeaking of that verſe in Luke where it is ſaid, *then ſhall there be ſigns in the ſun, and in the moon, and in the ſtars; and upon the earth diſtreſs, with perplexity of the nations*, ſays, 'the prediction, which the verſe under examination introduces, is accurately diſtinguiſhed by the hiſtorian, as not commencing till *after* the completion of the former. It was not, till after the calamities which were to befal the Jews ſhould be ended; after their capital and temple, their laſt reſource,

[17] Vol. II. p. 283.

'ſhould

'ſhould be inveſted and taken, and the wretched inhabi-
'tants deſtroyed or carried captive into all nations; after
'Jeruſalem ſhould be trodden by the Gentiles; nay, and
'after the triumph of the Gentiles ſhould be brought to a
'period; that the prophecy contained in this and the
'two ſubſequent verſes ſhould begin to take effect. The
'judicious reader, to be convinced of this, needs only
'give the paſſage an attentive peruſal[18].' To this quotation another from Mede may be added. To interpret the '*coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven*, 'and his kingdom then, of his coming to the deſtruction 'of Jeruſalem, is contrary to *the context* of our Saviour's 'prophecy: for the coming of Chriſt to deſtroy Jeruſa-'lem was the beginning and cauſe of that great and long 'tribulation of that people; but *the coming* and appearing '*of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven* is expreſsly 'ſaid ſhould be after it, *immediately after the days of* '*that tribulation*, &c. Matt. xxiv. 29. Mark xiii. 24.' To the ſame purpoſe Luke ſays, after, or when *the* '*Times* '*of the Gentiles are fulfilled*, THEN *ſhall be ſigns in* '*the ſun and moon*, and THEN *they ſhall ſee the Son* '*of man coming in a cloud*[19].' This point Mr. Mede had cloſely conſidered, and the foregoing ſtatement, he was convinced, was clear and incontrovertible. But ſome one, unacquainted with the character of this great commentator, may ſuppoſe, that, however profoundly learned, he might, notwithſtanding, be accuſtomed to frame his interpretations of ſcripture, haſtily and on light

[18] So extremely brief are Dr. Campbell's obſervations on our Lord's prophecy, that the paſſage above, to every word of which I ſubſcribe, conſtitutes a large part of them; and though that paſſage is accompanied with no doubts, the learned tranſlator, nevertheleſs, in direct oppoſition to it, renders the 32d verſe, *verily I ſay unto you that this generation ſhall not paſs, until* ALL *be accompliſhed.*

[19] P. 920.

grounds. To the conſideration of ſuch a one I recommend the following teſtimony of a learned prelate. 'Cool, deliberate, and ſevere, in forming his judgments, 'he was ſo far from being obſequious to the fancies of 'other men, that he was determined only by the laſt de-'gree of evidence, to acquieſce in any concluſions of his 'own[20].'

To the ſcholar, who is diſpoſed to pay yet farther attention to the prophetic diſcoveries of Jeſus, and is deſirous to ſtudy every verſe in the parallel account of Matthew, as well as that prophecy which is recorded in the xviith ch. of Luke[21], I recommend, as highly worthy of his peruſal, three chapters of the learned Brenius's treatiſe, *De Regno Eccleſiæ Glorioſo*[22].

[20] Such is the language of Hurd (vol. II. p. 124). I may add, that his friend Warburton, ſpeaking of the reign of James the firſt, entitles Mede, 'the greateſt divine and ſcholar of that age.' His Works, 4to, vol. V. p. 451.

[21] From v. 20—v. 37.

[22] Opera, Amſtelædami. 1666. Pars I. cap. 5, 7, and 8.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE DISPERSION AND RESTORATION OF THE JEWS REPEATEDLY FORETOLD.

TO the reſtoration of the Jews alluſion has ſeveral times been incidentally made. But ſuch is the perſpicuity, the number, and the importance, of the paſſages which foretell this event, that the ſubject deſerves to be illuſtrated in a ſeparate chapter. The predictions relative to this people, which have already been accompliſhed,

pliſhed, are, obſerves biſhop Newton, 'a ſufficient pledge 'and earneſt of what is yet to come[1].'

Various are the paſſages of Holy Writ, which point out the laſt and greateſt of their diſperſions. With reſpect to its extent, what ſimilitude could have been more expreſſive than that of the prophet Amos[2]? *I will ſift the houſe of Iſrael among* ALL NATIONS, *like as corn is ſifted in a ſieve.* With reſpect to the manner in which they have been treated, what denunciation could have been more correctly fulfilled, than that of Jeremiah[3]? *I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curſe, in all places whither I ſhall drive them.*

The predictions of Moſes, the founder of the Jewiſh polity, recorded in the xxviiith ch. of Deuteronomy, muſt alſo be admitted to be wonderfully perſpicuous and circumſtantial. Nor did they by any means receive their complete accompliſhment in the events of the Babyloniſh captivity. If, ſaid this divine law-giver, addreſſing himſelf to the Jews, you forſake the living God, then *ſhall* he *bring a nation againſt thee from far, from the end of the earth, as ſwift as the eagle flieth: a nation, whoſe tongue thou ſhalt not underſtand: a nation of fierce countenance, which ſhall not regard the perſon of the old, nor ſhew favour to the young. And he ſhall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land. And he ſhall beſiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou truſteſt, throughout all thy land.*

The nation, ſpoken of by the prophet, was to come *from far, from the end of the earth.* 'This ſhews,' ſays biſhop

[1] Vol. I. p. 240.
[2] IX. 9.
[3] XXIV. 9.

Patrick, that 'he ſpeaks of the Romans, rather than of the 'Chaldeans, who did not come *from far*, much leſs from 'the *end of the earth*:—whereas the Romans by whom 'they were laſt deſtroyed, came literally *from far*, and 'from *the end of the earth*; particularly Julius Severus 'was called by the emperor Hadrian to their deſtruction 'out of this iſland of Britain; wherein Veſpaſian alſo 'had given great proof of his conduct. And Hadrian 'himſelf, and Trajan, by whom they were ſtill more 'cruſhed, after Veſpaſian had deſtroyed their city and 'temple, were both Spaniards by birth. And, therefore, 'Manaſſeh Ben Iſrael ſays peremptorily, in his book *de* '*Termino Vitæ* (lib III. ſect. 3), this is to be underſtood 'of the ſoldiers in Veſpaſian's army, which he brought 'out of England, France, and Spain, and other remote 'parts of the world.' 'The Romans too,' ſays bp. Newton, 'for the rapidity of their conqueſts might very well 'be compared to eagles, and perhaps not without an allu-'ſion to the ſtandard of the Roman armies, which was 'an eagle[4].' Not only *the eagles*, and *the diſtance from Rome*, ſays Dr. Apthorp, 'diſcriminate the Romans from 'the Chaldeans, but alſo *the language*, for that of the 'latter was only a dialect of the Hebrew[5].'

This diſtant people, ſays the Jewiſh legiſlator, ſhall be *of fierce countenance, not regarding the perſon of the old, nor ſhewing favour to the young*. To the conduct of the Romans theſe particulars, ſays biſhop Patrick, are ſtrictly applicable; for they were 'a people ſtern, fierce, un-'daunted,' who 'inflexibly purſued their deſigns.' The paſſage that follows is from bp. Newton. 'When Veſ-'paſian entered Gadara, Joſephus ſaith, that "he ſlew "all, man by man, the Romans ſhowing mercy to no "age, out of hatred to the nation, and remembrance of

[4] Vol. I. p. 179. [5] Vol. I. p. 228.

"their

" their former injuries." The like ſlaughter was made ' at Gamala. " For no body eſcaped beſides two women, " and they eſcaped by concealing themſelves from the " rage of the Romans. For they did not ſo much as " ſpare young children, but every one, at that time, ſnatch- " ing up many, caſt them down from the citadel[6]." ' Their enemies were alſo to beſiege and take their cities. ' The Romans, as we may read in Joſephus's hiſtory of ' the Jewiſh war, demoliſhed ſeveral fortified places, ' before they beſieged and deſtroyed Jeruſalem. And ' the Jews may very well be ſaid to have *truſted in their* ' *high and fenced walls*, for they ſeldom ventured a bat- ' tle in the open field.' We read alſo, that, in the reign of Hadrian, ' 50 of their ſtrongeſt caſtles, and 985 of ' their beſt towns, were ſacked and demoliſhed[7].'

Moſes adds in the verſes which follow, the man's *eye ſhall be evil towards his brother, and towards the wife of his boſom; becauſe he hath nothing left him in the ſiege, and in the ſtraightneſs, wherewith thine enemies ſhall diſtreſs thee in all thy gates.* And in like manner the woman's *eye ſhall be evil toward the huſband of her boſom, and toward her ſon, and toward her daughter.* This alſo was fulfilled, and in the moſt literal manner. I know not whether the extremities of famine, to which the Jews were reduced in the memorable ſiege of their metropolis by Titus, are to be fully paralleled in all the records of hiſtory. ' Women,' ſays Joſephus, ' ſnatched the food ' out of the very mouths of their huſbands, and ſons of ' their fathers, and (what is moſt lamentable) mothers of ' their infants.' And ' in every houſe, if any ſemblance ' of food appeared, a battle enſued, and thoſe who were ' the deareſt friends, ſnatching away the miſerable pro-

[6] Bel. Jud. l. III. c. 7. l. IV. c. i.

[7] Newton, vol. I. p. 378; vol. II. p. 296.

'visions of life, fought with one another.' And we read in the same author, that a woman of rank and opulence killed and eat her own infant-child[8].

But the prophet does not foretell merely the greatness of their sufferings during the siege. What should happen to them at a subsequent period he also predicts: the unexampled dispersion they should experience, the universal opprobriums with which they should be assailed, and the cruel persecutions which they should encounter. *Ye shall*, says Moses, *be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess*[9]. *And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other*[10].—*And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy feet have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart*[11], *and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning!—And thou shalt be oppressed and spoiled evermore.—The Lord will make thy plagues wonderful,—even great plagues, and of long continuance.—And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.*

[8] Bel. Jud. l. V. c. 10; l. VI. c. 3.

[9] Moses elsewhere says, in the name of the Supreme Being, *I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.* Lev. xxvi. 33.

[10] In v. 25 of the same chapter Moses says, *and* thou *shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.*

[11] The same idea is elsewhere given by Moses in a more expanded form, and with great felicity of expression. *Upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts, in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.* Lev. xxvi. 36.

It

It is from the xxviiith ch. of Deuteronomy[12], that all theſe remarkable paſſages, which have been quoted from Moſes, are taken. 'Had any thing like this, in Moſes's 'time,' aſks Dr. Clarke, 'ever happened to any nation? 'Or was there in nature any probability that any ſuch 'thing ſhould ever happen to *any* people? That, when 'they were conquered by their enemies, and led into 'captivity, they ſhould neither continue in the place of 'their captivity, nor be ſwallowed up and loſt among 'their conquerors, but be ſcattered among all the nations 'of the world, and hated by all nations for many ages, 'and yet continue a people? Or could any deſcription 'of the Jews, written at this day, poſſibly be a more exact 'and lively picture of the ſtate they have *now* been in 'for many ages; than this prophetic deſcription, given by 'Moſes, more than 3000 years ago[13]?'

'Here,' ſays bp. Newton, 'are inſtances of prophecies, 'of prophecies delivered above three thouſand years ago, 'and yet as we ſee fulfilling in the world at this very 'time: and what ſtronger proofs can we deſire of the 'divine legation of Moſes? How theſe inſtances may af-'fect others, I know not; but for myſelf I muſt acknow-'ledge, they not only convince, but amaze and aſtoniſh 'me beyond expreſſion[14].' 'Chryſoſtom,' ſays Dr. Worthington[15], 'often preſſes the argument from the 'completion of the prophecies concerning the Jews, hav-

[12] Deut. xxviii. 37, 49—52, 59—67. Moſes ſays in another place, *And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not caſt them away, neither will I abhor them, to deſtroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them.* Lev. xxvi. 44.

[13] *Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Rel.* 1738, p 433. For a minute account of the fulfilment of all the prophecies relating to the Jews, in their diſperſed and perſecuted ſtate, Jortin, bp. Newton, and Baſnage may be conſulted.

[14] Vol. I. p. 199.

[15] Vol. II. p. 33.

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ing continued so long in his time. How much greater 'strength must this argument have acquired since[16].'

What bishop Newton has related respecting the origin of his Dissertations on Prophecy, in the dedication prefixed to them, may with pertinence be alleged, after the citation of the memorable prophecy of Moses. To the statement of the author of the Dissertations the infidel would do well to attend. Should he unite in himself the abilities of a Hume, a Gibbon and a Voltaire, he would not be equal to the task of demonstrating the insolidity of the bishop's conclusion. 'What first suggested the design were some conversations formerly with a great general[17], who had for many years the chief commands 'in the army, and was a man of good understanding, and 'of some reading, but unhappily had no regard for revealed religion or the clergy. When the prophecies were 'urged as a proof of revelation, he constantly derided the 'notion, asserted that there was no such thing, and that 'the prophecies which were pretended were written after 'the events. He was informed, that though such a thing 'might with less scruple and more confidence be affirmed 'of some prophecies fulfilled long ago, yet it could never 'be proved of any, the contrary might be proved almost 'to a demonstration: but it could not be so much as affirmed of several prophecies without manifest absurdity; 'for there were several prophecies in scripture, which 'were not fulfilled till these latter ages, and were fulfilling 'even now, and consequently could not be framed after 'the events, but undeniably were written and published 'many ages before. He was startled at this, and said, 'he must acknowledge, that if this point could be proved 'to satisfaction, there would be no arguing against such

[16] Orat. III. in Judæos, tom. VI. p. 337. ed Savil.

[17] In the recently published Discourses of the Rev. Mr. Robert Gray, he is said to have been Marshal Wade.

'plain

'plain matter of fact; it would certainly convince him, 'and he believed would be the readieſt way to convince 'every reaſonable man, of the truth of revelation.'

There are ſubjects, which to contemplate with what is called *philoſophic indifference* (a favourite and perverted expreſſion among a certain claſs of perſons), infallibly indicates a want of feeling and a deficiency of diſcernment; betrays the inconteſtable marks of an unnatural inſenſibility to the beſt intereſts of mankind, and of a blind diſregard to their own moſt important concerns and ultimate deſtination. Prophecy and Revelation are doubtleſs deſerving of being ranked in this claſs of ſubjects. The fact, however, is, that infidels are generally chargeable with omitting to conſult the pages of prophecy at all; and, when they do conſult them, they bring not along with them that degree of previous knowledge, without whieh, in many caſes, it were vain to attempt to arrive at their meaning. Is it then to be wondered, that viewing them, as they do, with an eye, rendered dim by indifference, jaundiced by prejudice, and clouded by ignorance, they ſhould, as they haſtily inſpect them, diſcover no ſolid ground on which to ſtand? Is it not to be expected, that, amid this religious apathy and neglect of inquiry, they will ſtill wander in the labyrinths of error and the perplexing paths of infidelity; and, remaining involved in its melancholy gloom, will ſtill tread over the tremulous ſurface of doubt and uncertainty; without being able to deſcry, through the miſts of futurity, miſts which the light of revelation enables man to penetrate, thoſe manſions of immortality and happineſs, of exalted virtue and improved intellect, which are ſituated beyond the confines of the grave and this ſublunary world, and to which the Chriſtian looks forward with ſuch ſteady confidence and ſuch tranſporting hope?

But

But I return to the ſubject of the chapter. The ſtubborn incredulity of the Jews, and the extraordinary deſolation of their land, Iſaiah hus deſcribes. And he ſaid, *Go, and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not. Make*[18] *the heart of this people fat, and make their eyes heavy, and ſhut their eyes; leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then ſaid I, Lord how long? And he anſwered, until the cities be waſted without inhabitant, and the houſes without man, and the land be utterly deſolate. And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forſaking in the midſt of the land*[19]. 'Here is,' ſays bp. Newton, 'a remarkable gradation in the denouncing of theſe judgments. Not only 'Jeruſalem and *the cities ſhould be waſted without inhabitant*, but even the ſingle *houſes* ſhould be *without man*; 'and not only the *houſes* of the cities ſhould be *without man*; but even the country ſhould *be utterly deſolate*; 'and not only the people ſhould be removed out of the 'land, but *the Lord* ſhould *remove them far away*; and 'they ſhould not be removed for a ſhort period, but there 'ſhould be *a great* or rather *a long forſaking in the midſt* 'of the land. And hath not the world ſeen all theſe particulars exactly fulfilled? Have not the Jews laboured 'under a ſpiritual blindneſs and infatuation in *hearing* 'but not underſtanding, in *ſeeing but not perceiving* the 'Meſſiah, after the accompliſhment of ſo many pro'phecies, after the performance of ſo many miracles? 'Hath not their *land been utterly deſolate*? Have they 'not been *removed far away* into the moſt diſtant parts of 'the earth? And hath not their removal or baniſhment

[18] '[In the ſtyle of ſcripture the prophets are ſaid to do what they de'clare *will be done*.' Bp. Newton in loc. vol. I. p. 332

[19] VI. 9—12.

'been

'been now of near 1700 years duration? And do they 'not ſtill continue deaf and blind, obſtinate and unbeliev-'ing? The Jews, at the time of the delivery of this pro-'phecy, gloried in being the peculiar church and people 'of God: and would any Jew of himſelf have thought 'or have ſaid, that his nation would in proceſs of time 'become an infidel and reprobate nation, infidel and re-'probate for many ages, oppreſſed by men, and forſaken 'by God? It was above 750 years before Chriſt, that 'Iſaiah predicted theſe things; and how could he have 'predicted them, unleſs he had been illuminated by the 'divine viſion; or could they have ſucceeded according-'ly, unleſs the ſpirit of prophecy had been the ſpirit of 'God[20].'

'That the Jews,' ſays the bp of Worceſter, 'ſhould '*continue* for ſo many ages under ſuch treatment,' as they have experienced; 'every where and always ſpurned, 'reviled, oppreſſed; yet neither worn out by this uſage; 'nor induced by it to renounce their offenſive profeſſion, 'and take refuge in the maſs of people among whom they 'live; that neither time, nor cuſtom, nor ſuffering, 'ſhould get the better of their bigotry or patience; but 'that they ſhould ſtill ſubſiſt, a numerous, a diſtinct, a 'wretched people, as they do to this day; all this hath 'ſomething prodigious in it, which the common prin-'ciples of human nature will not eaſily explain.—They 'thrive under their oppreſſions, and ſeem to multiply 'amidſt their diſtreſſes; as if the order of things were 'reverſed in regard to them, and the ſame cauſes ope-'rated to the conſervation of this people, which tend ſo

[20] Bp. Newton, vol. I p. 233. 'That a country ſhould be depopulated 'and deſolated by the incurſions and depredations of foreign enemies 'is,' ſays the prelate in another place (p. 222),' nothing wonderful, but 'that it ſhould lie ſo many ages in this miſerable condition is more than 'man could foreſee, and could be revealed only by God.'

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'naturally to the waſte and deſtruction of every other. 'That *ſmall* colonies of men, tranſported into ſtrange 'and populous nations, ſhould preſerve diſtinct exiſt- 'ence, and not inſenſibly moulder away and mix them- 'ſelves with their numerous native maſters; this, I think, 'is without example in the hiſtory of mankind. If 'the Jews might be expected to abound any where, it 'ſhould methinks be in Judea; where the ſight of the 'Holy Land, and the memory of their paſt fortunes, 'might invigorate their prejudices, and perpetuate their 'attachment to the Jewiſh name and worſhip. But it ſo 'happens, that the number of Jews in that country hath 'now for many ages been inconſiderable, while they 'ſwarm in every other[21].'

'The drops of rain which fall, nay the great rivers 'which flow into the ocean, are ſoon mingled and loſt 'in that immenſe body of waters: and the ſame *in all hu- 'man probability* would have been the fate of the Jews, 'they would have been mingled and loſt in the common 'maſs of mankind; but on the contrary they flow into all 'parts of the world, mix with all nations, and yet keep 'ſeparate from all. They ſtill live as a diſtinct people, 'and yet they no where live according to their own laws, 'no where elect their own magiſtrates, no where enjoy 'the full exerciſe of their religion[22].'

'Religions,' ſays Baſnage, 'triumph under the protec- 'tion of a conqueror; they languiſh and ſink with ſink- 'ing monarchies. Paganiſm, which once overſpread the 'face of the earth, is extinct. The Chriſtian church, 'glorious in its martyrs, yet was conſiderably diminiſhed 'by the perſecutions to which it was expoſed; and the 'breaches, made in it by thoſe acts of violence, it was 'not eaſy to repair. Here, however, we behold a church

[21] Hurd, vol. I. p. 177, 182, 183. [22] Bp. Newton, vol. I. p. 216.

'hated

'hated and perſecuted for ſeventeen centuries; but never-'theleſs ſuſtaining itſelf and widely extended. Often 'have kings employed the ſeverity of edicts and the hand 'of executioners to ruin it. Seditious multitudes, by 'means of maſſacres, have committed outrages againſt 'it ſtill more tragical. Princes and People, Pagans, Ma-'hometans, and Chriſtians, at variance in ſo many things, 'have coaleſced in the deſign of exterminating it, and 'have been unable to ſucceed. The *Buſh of Moſes*, ſur-'rounded with flames, perpetually burns, and is never 'conſumed. At different periods, the Jews have been 'expelled from all parts of the world; which hath only 'ſerved to ſpread them in all regions. From age to age 'they have been expoſed to perſecution and miſery[23]. Yet 'ſtill they ſubſiſt, in ſpite of the ignominy and the hatred 'which hath purſued them in all places; whilſt the greateſt 'monarchies are fallen, and nothing remains of them be-'ſides the name[24].'

In addition to thoſe important facts, the *length* and the *ſeverity* of their ſufferings, there are ſome other circumſtances, not perhaps entirely unworthy of being noted, which ſerve to augment our wonder at the Jews ſtill remaining unintermingled with the natives, and with the ſects of the various climes which they inhabit. 'They 'profeſs a religion *founded* on temporal promiſes only; and 'how miſerably theſe have failed them, the experience 'of many ages hath now ſhewn.' They 'are ſhut out 'from the only country in the world, where the ſeveral 'rites and ordinances of their religion can be regularly 'and *lawfully* obſerved.' They 'have, beſides, the ſen-

[23] 'The account of the Jews who have been plundered, ſent naked into 'baniſhment, ſtarved, tortured, left to periſh in priſons, hanged, and 'burnt by Chriſtians, would fill many volumes.' Jortin's Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. II. p. 420.

[24] *Hiſt. des Juifs*, VI i.

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'ſible mortification of knowing, that all their brethren 'of the diſperſion are every where in equal diſtreſs with 'themſelves; and that there is not one Jewiſh ſtate or 'ſovereignty ſubſiſting on the face of the whole earth[25].'

From conſidering the preſent extraordinary ſituation of the Jews, and the prophecies that foretell their diſperſion, I ſhall paſs on to ſome of thoſe, which aſſert their future reſtoration.

'About the time of the fall of the Othman empire and 'of the Chriſtian Antichriſt, the Jews,' ſays bp. Newton, 'ſhall turn to the Lord, and be reſtored to their own 'land. *Innumerable* are the paſſages concerning the con-'verſion and reſtoration of this people[26].' This, obſerves Mr. Lowth, 'is plainly foretold by MOST of the 'prophets of the Old Teſtament[27].' 'That the Jews,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'ſhall return to their own country, 'about the time of the commencement of the millen-'nium; that they ſhall poſſeſs it many years in peace, and 'be a very flouriſhing nation, ſeem to be moſt diſtinctly 'foretold in many prophecies of the Old Teſtament[28].'

From thoſe words of Chriſt, that *Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, ſays Wolzogenius, 'it clearly appears, 'that to the oppreſſion of the Jewiſh nation by the Gen-'tiles a certain termination and limit is placed; ſo that 'it is unqueſtionable, that they will not remain for ever 'in that ſtate of ſervitude, but at ſome period will be 'emancipated from this yoke.' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks bp. Newton. 'When *the Times of the Gentiles* 'ſhall *be fulfilled*, then the expreſſion implies that the 'Jews ſhall be reſtored: and for what reaſon, can we 'believe, that though they are diſperſed among all nations,

[25] Hurd, vol. I. p. 180. [26] Vol. III. p. 389.
[27] On Iſa. XI. ii.
[28] Inſtitutes of Nat. and Rev. Rel. vol II. p. 420.

'yet

'yet—they are kept distinct from all, but for the farther 'manifestation of God's purposes towards them[29]?' *Je-* '*rusalem*, says bp. Hurd, was '*to be trodden down of the* '*Gentiles*[30], *until the Times of the Gentiles* should *be ful-* '*filled*[31].' Nor say, that this last prophecy is indefinite, for '*the Times of the Gentiles* is a period well known in the 'prophetic writings; a period of long duration indeed, 'as the event hath shewn; yet a period, marked out by 'other prophecies (which may come, in turn, to be con-'sidered in this Lecture) no less distinctly than their other 'captivities had been[32].' As the learned prelate has not thought proper to treat farther on the subject, I shall, with respect to it, quote from the Discourse of Mr. Mede, *on the Apostasy of the Latter Times*, which the bishop entitles 'exquisite and unanswerable.' '*Until the Times of* '*the Gentiles be fulfilled*: that is (as was said before) un-'til THE MONARCHIES OF THE GENTILES should be 'finished. For *the Times of the Gentiles* are that last

[29] Vol. II. 314.

[30] Since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and during a course of above 1700 years, it has accordingly never once been in possession of the Jews, unless indeed it be fact (and this is a matter disputed), that in their rebellion against Hadrian, a small number of them occupied it for a few months or for about the period of a year. It has successively been under the dominion of the Romans, Saracens, Franks, Mamalukes, and Turks. 'And there is not the least apparent probability,' says Mr. Evanson, 'that its condition will be altered, till the world shall see that Grand Re-'volution in human affairs take place, at the period denominated in all the 'Christian scriptures *the coming of Jesus Christ*, and the establishment of '*the kingdom of God* upon earth.' On the Dissonance of the Evangelists, 'p. 101.

[31] As Christ denominates the period in which we now live, *the Times of the Gentiles*, it is plain, that those principles of practice, and those systems of religion, which at present have the ascendant, are regarded, in the eye of prophecy, as unworthy of the name of Christian, and as in fact being *gentile* or *heathen*.

[32] Vol. I. p. 174.

'period of the Roman kingdom propheſied of, a *Time*, '*Times, and half a Time*[33].' Now theſe, Mede elſewhere obſerves, are equivalent to three prophetic years and a half, or 1260 ordinary years. But, as there is reaſon to believe, that the concluſion of the 1260 years is the period, when the monarchies of the Gentiles will be materially enfeebled and endangered, and not that when they will be univerſally overthrown and deſtroyed, *the Times of the Gentiles* mentioned by Chriſt do, perhaps, not merely contain the 1260 years, during which antichriſtianiſm and tyranny were triumphantly to prevail, but likewiſe that ſhorter and ſubſequent period, during which antichriſtian oppreſſion is to maintain a partial aſcendency, and which is immediately to precede the downfal of the corrupt ſyſtems of power eſtabliſhed in Europe.

Whilſt the memorable declaration of Jeſus, that *Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles*, is in the xxiſt ch. of Luke and the 24th verſe, he ſays in the 22d verſe, of the ſame chapter, *theſe be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.* Now 'where were theſe things written,' aſks bp. Chandler[34], 'but in Daniel, whom Chriſt cites by name in the begin-'ning of this diſcourſe[35]?' And our Lord, as the learned prelate has obſerved, refers in particular to the two laſt verſes of the ixth chapter of Daniel, where, ſpeaking of

[33] P. 873. '*Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the* '*times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, i. e.' ſays Mr. Whiſton, 'till the times 'allotted by the divine providence, for the dominion of the four Gentile 'and idolatrous monarchies, be fulfilled.' p. 70. In like manner Brenius declares, that theſe *times will be fulfilled*, when the deſtruction of the monarchies, predicted by Daniel, ſhall have taken place. See the ſame obſerved by Dr. Wells, by bp. Newton (vol. II. p. 314), and by Mr. Lowth on Dan. ix. 27.

[34] Def. of Chriſtianity, p. 359.

[35] *When ye, therefore, ſhall ſee the abomination of deſolation, ſpoken of by Daniel, the prophet*, &c. Mat. xxiv. 15.

Jeruſalem

Jeruſalem and the coming of the Romans to beſiege it, he ſays, *and the people of the prince that ſhall come ſhall deſtroy the city and the ſanctuary; and—he ſhall cauſe the ſacrifice and the oblation to ceaſe; and with the overſpreading of abominations he ſhall make it deſolate, even until the conſummation, and that determined, ſhall be poured upon the deſolator*[36]. I now give the explanation. And the Roman army ſhall come to deſtroy Jeruſalem and its temple; they ſhall cauſe its ſacrifices and its offerings completely to ceaſe; with their idolatrous armies[37] they ſhall render it deſolate; and the land ſhall continue[38] to be laid waſte and overſpread with abominations, till the period appointed for their being conſummated arrive; and, that determined æra being come, deſolation ſhall overwhelm the deſolators themſelves. A doubt here ariſes, to whom does the expreſſion *the prince*, here allude? *The people of the prince*, ſays Dr. Wells, are 'the people of the Roman empire, or Roman army under 'Titus;' and it is of them he obſerves, that the pronoun *he*, which afterwards occurs, is to be underſtood. But, by *the people of the prince that ſhall come*, Mede underſtands the future people of the Meſſiah. The two opinions do not, however, ſtand widely ſeparate; for the people of the Meſſiah, ſays Mede, ſignify 'the people of 'the Roman empire, where Chriſt was principally to 'have his church and kingdom, whilſt Iſrael ſhould be 'rejected[39].' In like manner 'biſhop Lloyd corrects the 'common tranſlation thus, *the prince's* (i. e. the Meſ-

[36] The laſt word I give, as rendered by Dr. Wells, biſhop Lloyd, and biſhop Chandler.

[37] What is tranſlated *overſpreading of abominations* is perhaps a phraſe of general application. It ſignifies, according to Mede, 'an army of idola-'trous Gentiles.' p. 870.

[38] This deſolation, ſays Mede (in loc.), would 'continue until the monarchies of the Gentiles ſhould be finiſhed.' p. 873.

[39] P. 868.

'fiah's) *future people*.—This people that learned prelate 'underſtands to be the Romans and their empire, which 'was the ſeat of the Chriſtian church[40].'

The quotation which follows is from bp. Chandler. What is in Daniel, '*even until the conſummation, and* '*that determined, ſhall be poured upon the deſolator*, is 'interpreted by Chriſt, *Jeruſalem is trodden down of the* '*Gentiles, until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, and 'then ſhall be the conſummation, i. e. the end of wrath 'upon this people. *The Gentiles* in St. Luke are *the* '*Deſolators* in Daniel; and in both the Roman empire 'is intended, by whoſe army this great deſolation was 'effected. The Jews therefore are, by Chriſt's interpre-'tation of Daniel, to remain in a long captivity, till the 'coming of the period that God hath fixed for pouring 'out his wrath on the Roman empire. And that empire 'being ſtill ſubſiſting, as the Jews affirm, in one of its 'forms, according to the viſion of Nebuchadnezzar's 'image; ſo it hath happened, that all the efforts of the 'Jews, though many and vigorous, for rebuilding their 'city and temple, have been vain[41].' The next extract is a part of Dr. Wells's paraphraſe on the laſt two verſes from Daniel. 'During the period of time reckoned by 'ſcripture to the Fourth and laſt kingdom of the Gentiles, 'not only the Romans, but alſo the Saracens, and the 'Popiſh Chriſtian kings of Jeruſalem, and the Turks, '(each of which, though of different extract, yet ſhall be 'people or inhabitants of the countries once belonging to 'the Roman empire) in their reſpective order and times 'ſhall be the lords of Jeruſalem, and ſhall profane the 'ſaid holy city with their reſpective abominations, or 'falſe and idolatrous worſhip,—even until that grand 'conſummation of God's indignation againſt the Jewiſh

[40] See Mr. Lowth in loc. [41] Def of Chriſtianity, p. 360.

'nation

'nation, or Iſraelites in general, ſo often and ſo much 'ſpoken of in holy ſcripture. Then, when this time de-'termined for putting an end to the Fourth and laſt king-'dom, and ſo to the whole ſucceſſion of the four king-'doms of the Gentiles, ſhall be come, that is (in the 'words of our Saviour, *Luke* xxi. 24), when *the Time of the 'Gentiles* (viz. of their lording over the Jews and other 'Iſraelites) *ſhall be fulfilled*; then, I ſay, that utter de-'ſolation, which is *determined* upon all the enemies of 'Chriſt or of his true religion, *ſhall be poured upon the 'deſolator*, i. e. upon the Gentile people inhabiting the '(once) countries of the Roman empire, namely ſuch of 'them as ſhall then be either downright oppoſers of Chriſ-'tianity, or elſe falſe Chriſtians.—As for Iſrael; all Iſrael 'ſhall then be converted to Chriſtianity.'

Immediately after predicting the wide diſperſion of the Iſraelites, Moſes ſays, *But if from thence thou ſhalt ſeek the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt find him, if thou ſeek him with all thy heart and with all thy ſoul. When thou art in tribulation, and all theſe things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and ſhalt be obedient unto his voice, (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God); he will not forſake thee, neither deſtroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he ſware unto them*[42]. The great legiſlator of the Hebrews alſo elſewhere ſays, *it ſhall come to paſs, when all theſe things are come upon thee, the bleſſing and the curſe, which I have ſet before thee, and thou ſhalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and ſhalt return unto the Lord thy God, and ſhalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul; that then the Lord thy God will*

[42] Deut. iv. 29, 30, 31.

*turn thy captivity, and have compaſſion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath ſcattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the uttermoſt parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers poſſeſſed, and thou ſhalt poſſeſs it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy ſoul*[43].

No leſs perſpicuous is a prophecy of Ezekiel. Nor is it in the leaſt conditional. *Thus ſaith the Lord God; behold, I will take the children of Iſrael from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every ſide, and bring them into their own land.—And they ſhall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my ſervant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they ſhall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever*[44].

Not leſs ſtriking is the declaration in the xlvith chapter of Jeremiah (v. 28). *Fear thou not, O Jacob my ſervant, ſaith the Lord: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee.* 'The 'providence of God,' ſays bp. Newton, 'has been re-'markable in *the deſtruction of their enemies*, as well as '*in their preſervation*'. For from the beginning who 'have been the great enemies and oppreſſors of the Jewiſh 'nation, removed them from their own land, and com-'pelled them into captivity and ſlavery? The Egyptians 'afflicted them much, and detained them in bondage

[43] Deu. xxx. 1—6. [44] xxxvii. 21, 25.

'ſeveral

'ſeveral years. The Aſſyrians carried away captive the 'ten tribes of Iſrael; and the Babylonians afterwards, 'the two remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The 'Syro-Macedonians, eſpecially Antiochus Epiphanes, 'cruelly perſecuted them: and the Romans utterly diſ-'ſolved the Jewiſh ſtate, and diſperſed the people ſo as 'they have never been able to recover their city and 'country again. And where are now theſe great and 'famous monarchies, which in their turns ſubdued and 'oppreſſed the people of God? Are they not vaniſhed as 'a dream, and not only their power, but their very 'names, loſt in the earth?—What a wonder of providence 'is it, that the vanquiſhed ſhould ſo many ages ſurvive 'the victors, and the former be ſpread all over the world, 'while the latter are no more[45].'

The paſſages next to be quoted, beſides aſcertaining the reſtoration and the future meliorated ſituation of the Jews, corroborate that interpretation of our Lord's prophecy, which was before alleged; becauſe they ſpeak the ſame language with reſpect to *the period* when this perſecuted people ſhall be reſtored, declaring that this will happen about the time, when a great Revolution takes place in the ſymbolic *heavens* and the ſymbolic *earth*.

The prophet Joel, immediately after foretelling in thoſe verſes which have already been cited[46], v. 9—14[47], the deciſive defeat of the antichriſtian armies; in v. 15 declares, in the ſymbolic language of prophecy, the conſequences of that defeat, that *the ſun and the moon ſhall be darkened, and the ſtars ſhall withdraw their ſhining*, and that *the heavens and the earth ſhall ſhake*, *The Lord*, he immediately adds, at this period *will be the hope of*

[45] Vol. I. p. 218.
[46] In p. 301 and 302.
[47] Ch. III.

*his people, and the ſtrength of the children of Iſrael*[48]. *So ſhall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling*[49] *in Zion, my holy mountain: then ſhall Jeruſalem be holy, and there ſhall no ſtrangers paſs through her any more.* My favour towards you, ye ſhall *know*, ye ſhall learn by experience. Then Jeruſalem ſhall be untouched by foreign armies, and no more ſhall they paſs through her ſtreets and her provinces at their pleaſure.

Iſaiah after recurring to the ſame claſs of ſymbols, and ſaying in ch. lxv. 17, *behold I create new heavens and a new earth*, adds in the two ſucceeding verſes, *But ye ſhall rejoice and exult* IN THE AGE TO COME[50], *which I create: for, lo! I create Jeruſalem a ſubject of joy, and her people of gladneſs; and I will exult in Jeruſalem, and rejoice in my people. And there ſhall not be heard any more therein, the voice of weeping, and the voice of a diſtreſsful cry*[51].

In another place Iſaiah ſays, that, when men *ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy*, and when *the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*, that is to ſay, at the commencement of the millennium; *it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Lord ſhall ſet his hand again the ſecond time to recover the remnant of his people, which ſhall be left, from Aſſyria, and from Egypt,—and from the iſles of the ſea. And he ſhall ſet up an enſign for the nations, and ſhall aſſemble the outcaſts of Iſrael, and gather together the diſperſed of Judah from the four corners of the earth*[52].' In the expreſſion, *the iſles of the ſea*, Europe, ſays Vitringa, is undoubtedly included.

[48] In explication of theſe words, Dr. Pococke pertinently cites, Luk. xxi. 28, *Then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh.*

[49] *To dwell among*, ſays Dr. Lancaſter, ſignifies protection.

[50] i. e. in the αιων or eminent period, called the millennium.

[51] To bp. Lowth the tranſlation above belongs.

[52] XI. 9, 11, 13. In the verſions of bp. Lowth and Mr. Dodſon it is, *from the four extremities of the earth.*

After

After alleging ſo many paſſages, all of which prove that the reſtoration of the Jews *will* be accompliſhed, and ſeveral of which ſerve to evince, that that event will take place about the time, when the new ſymbolic heavens and ſymbolic earth are to commence; I ſhall perhaps be thought to have unneceſſarily directed the attention of the reader to the following citation from Dr. Whitby. It is not, however, long, and, of itſelf, ſeems capable of conveying conviction to the mind.

'St. John ſpeaks of *a new heaven and a new earth*, 'that he ſaw, ſaying, *the former heaven and earth were* '*paſſed away*, Rev. xxi. 1: and introduceth our Lord, 'ſaying, *Behold, I make all things new*, v. 5. And the 'prophet Iſaiah introduceth God, thus ſpeaking at the 'converſion of the Jews, *Behold, I create new heavens* '*and a new earth, and the former ſhall not be remem-*'*bered, nor come into* mind[53]. Iſ. lxv. 17. And 'again,—in the very words of the author of the Revela-'tions, *Behold, I make all things new*, ch. xliii. 18, '19. Seeing then theſe *new heavens* and *new earth* muſt 'be contemporary with the converſion of the Jews, ſure 'they muſt be before the conflagration of the world, i. e. 'before the Jewiſh nation be conſumed to aſhes; and 'therefore can only be a *new heaven* and *new earth*, 'in that moral ſenſe in which Maimonides explains the 'phraſe[54].'

In the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, agreeably to what might be expected, the prophecies relative to the future ſtate of the Jews are principally to be found. That

[53] In his *Thoughts on the Grand Apoſtacy* (p. 190), Mr. Taylor (the author of *Ben Mordecai's Apology*) has not omitted to warn the reader, that this paſſage relates not 'to the diſſolution of the natural, but merely of the poli-'tical, world.'

[54] On the Millennium, c. II. ſect. 3. The expreſſion of the prophet, Maimonides admoniſhes the reader, is ſymbolically to be underſtood.

there

there is a plain prediction of the great founder of our religion upon this ſubject has, however, been ſeen. To this a prophetic declaration of St. Paul may with propriety be added. In the beginning of the XIth chapter of his epiſtle to the Romans, he aſks, *Hath God caſt away his people? God forbid*, ſays the apoſtle, *God hath not caſt away his people?* And again in verſes 25 and 26, *I would not, brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this myſtery,—that blindneſs in part is happened to Iſrael, until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in. And ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved.* That the deſcendants of Abraham, much as they have been diſtinguiſhed by obſtinate incredulity, ſhall hereafter acknowledge the evidences, and enjoy the advantages, of Chriſtianity, is, indeed, the great truth, which is to be deduced from the whole tenor of the chapter[55].

[55] Dr. Whitby, in his elaborate, and, I may add, in his convincing, Appendix to the xith chapter of the Romans, ſays, to ſtrengthen the argument which I have offered from it, 'for the converſion of the Jewiſh nation to the Chriſtian faith; let it be noted, that this hath been the *conſtant* doctrine of the church of Chriſt, owned by the Greek and Latin Fathers, and by ALL commentators I have met with on this place. Among the Greek Fathers by St. Chryſoſtom,' Theodoret, Gennadius, Photius, Theophylact, and Origen. 'All the Latin Fathers, who have left us any commentaries, or notes on this epiſtle, are plainly of the ſame mind, as you may ſee by conſulting Hilary the Deacon, Primaſius, Sedulius, and Haymo, upon the 25th verſe of this chapter.' That the exiled wanderers of Judea ſhall hereafter embrace the Chriſtian faith, was alſo the opinion of Jerom and Juſtin Martyr, of Cyril and Auguſtin, as their writings atteſt.

That the Jewiſh nation ſhall hereafter be converted to Chriſtianity is obſerved, in their reſpective commentaries on the xith. ch. of the Epiſtle to the Romans by Poole and Mr. Samuel Clark, by John Locke and Mr. Taylor of Norwich, by Doctors Guyſe, Doddridge, and Wells, by Brenius, Slichtingius, and Crellius, by Pareus, Beza, Marlorat, and Eraſmus. And that this is the import of St. Paul's words is incidentally obſerved by Vitringa (in Jeſai. tom. II. p. 795).

It

It is obſervable, ſays Dr. Hartley, that 'the promiſes 'of reſtoration relate to the ten tribes, as well as the two 'of Judah and Benjamin[56].' 'That the Jews, both of 'the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the other 'ten, ſhall hereafter be reſtored to their own land, is,' ſays Mr. Hallett, 'foretold by ALL the ancient pro-'phets. The twelve tribes of Iſrael continued one peo-'ple till the reign of Rehoboam, ſon of Solomon; when 'the ten tribes revolted from him. Theſe ten tribes 'were called, the kingdom of Iſrael: the other two 'were called, the kingdom of Judah. About 250 years 'after the diviſion, the kingdom of Iſrael was con-'quered by the Aſſyrians, and the people carried away 'captive, 2 Kings, xvii. 5, 6, &c. Theſe have never 'yet returned to Judea[57].'

'The difficulty of finding out the habitations of the 'ten tribes hath', ſays bp. Newton, induced ſome 'to 'maintain, that they returned into their own country 'with the other two tribes after the Babyloniſh captivity. 'The decree, indeed, of Cyrus extended to *all the peo-'ple of God* (Ezra I. 3.), and that of Artaxerxes to *all 'the people of Iſrael* (vii. 13.): and no doubt many of 'the Iſraelites took advantage of theſe decrees, and re-'turned with Zerubbabel and Ezra to their own cities: 'but ſtill the main body of the ten tribes remained be-'hind. Ezra, who ſhould beſt know, ſaith, that there '*roſe up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin* '(1. 5.), and he calleth the Samaritans *the adverſaries 'of Judah and Benjamin* (iv. 1.): theſe two tribes were 'the principals, the others were only as acceſſories. And, 'if they did not return at this time, they cannot be ſup-

[56] On Man, vol. II. p. 373.

[57] Notes on Several Texts of Scripture and Diſcourſes, by Joſeph Hallett, Jun. vol. III. p. 409.

'poſed

'poſed to have returned in a body at any time after this: 'for we read of no ſuch adventure in hiſtory, we know 'neither the time nor the occaſion of their return, nor 'who were their generals or leaders in this expedition. 'Joſephus, who ſaw his country for ſeveral years in as 'flouriſhing a condition as at any time ſince the captivity, 'affirms, that Ezra ſent a copy of the decree of Artaxerxes 'to all of the ſame nation throughout Media, where the 'ten tribes lived in captivity, and many of them came 'with their effects to Babylon, deſiring to return to Je-'ruſalem: but the main body of the Iſraelites abode 'in that region: and therefore it hath happened, ſaith 'he[58], that there are two tribes in Aſia and Europe, 'living in ſubjection to the Romans, but the ten tribes 'are beyond the Euphrates to this time[59].' And it is obſerved by Prideaux, 'that, during all the time of the 'ſecond temple, and for a great many ages after, the 'number of the Jews in Chaldea, Aſſyria, and Perſia, 'grew to be ſo very great, that they were all along 'thought to exceed the number of the Jews of Paleſtine, 'even in thoſe times when that country was beſt inha-'bited by them[60].'

With reſpect to the ten tribes, the following queſtions, which bp. Newton has ſtated, are, as he obſerves, doubtleſs embarraſſing. 'Where have they ſubſiſted all 'this while? And where is their ſituation, or what is 'their condition at preſent[61]?' It may, however, be obſerved, that the Jews, who ſtill ſubſiſt under great circumſtances of depreſſion in Perſia, are the deſcen-

[58] Antiq. lib. II. cap. 5. ſect. 2. p. 482. edit. Hudſon.

[59] Vol. I. p. 209.

[60] Connection of the Hiſt. of the Old and New Teſt. fol. 7th ed. vol. I. p. 108.

[61] Vol. I. p. 207.

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dants of the ten tribes[62]; and ſome paſſages from a recent work of Oriental literature may deſerve to be tranſcribed, as *they ſeem to afford ſome hope*, that a ray of light may be unexpectedly thrown over a ſubject, which has hitherto been dark and unuſually clouded by difficulties.

After an account of the Afghans, inſerted in *the Aſiatic Reſearches*, the parent of that work, Sir William Jones, who unites in his own perſon two very rare characters, that of an accompliſhed Oriental linguiſt and a meritorious Britiſh inhabitant of Hindoſtan, adds, 'This 'account of the Afghans may lead to a very intereſting 'diſcovery. We learn from Eſdras[63], that the ten tribes, 'after a wandering journey, came to a country called 'Arſareth, where we may ſuppoſe they ſettled. Now 'the Afghans ARE SAID BY THE BEST PERSIAN HIS-'TORIANS TO BE DESCENDED FROM THE JEWS; 'they have traditions among themſelves of ſuch a de-'ſcent; and it is even aſſerted, that their families are 'diſtinguiſhed by the names of Jewiſh tribes, although, 'ſince their converſion to the Iſlam, they ſtudiouſly 'conceal their origin. The *Puſhto* language, of which 'I have ſeen a dictionary, has a manifeſt reſemblance to 'the Chaldaic; and a conſiderable diſtrict under their 'dominion is called Hazareh, or Hazaret, which might 'eaſily have been changed into the word uſed by Eſdras.

[62] See Baſnage's Hiſt. of the Jews, b. VI. ch. 2, 4.

[63] B. II. ch. xiii. 41—50. Viſionary and wild as many parts of the Second Book of Eſdras certainly are, it nevertheleſs aſcertains the antiquity of this tradition. It is, declares Bengelius, a matter admitted by the learned, that this book was written in the beginning of the ſecond century (*Intr. to the Apoc.* &c. p. 285); and Baſnage, ſpeaking of the author of it, ſays (Hiſt. of the Jews, b. VI. c. 2, 4), 'we muſt place him 'at the end of the firſt, or beginning of the ſecond, century.'

'I ſtrongly

'I ſtrongly recommend an inquiry into the literature and 'hiſtory of the Afghans[64].'

The title given to the piece, to which Sir William Jones's obſervations are annexed, is *on the Deſcent of the Afghans from the Jews*. It is tranſlated from the Perſian by Mr. Vanſittart; and the Perſian work is itſelf an abridgment of a more early performance, written in the Puſhto or Afghan language, and entitled, *the Secrets of the Afghans*. It is from this Perſian abridgment that the following ſtatements are taken. 'The 'Afghans, according to their own traditions, are the 'poſterity of Melic Talut' (king Saul), and Afghan, who had a military command under Solomon, was the grandſon of Talut. Then follows an account of the war between the children of Iſrael and the Amalekites, and various particulars, relative to the Jewiſh monarchs, Saul and David, and the prophet Samuel. 'The Afghans 'are called Solaimani, either becauſe they were formerly 'the ſubjects of Solomon, king of the Jews, or becauſe 'they inhabit the mountain of Solomon.—Their nation 'has produced many conquerors of provinces,' and ſeven princes 'of this race have ſat upon the throne of 'Dehli.'

The order of ranks, which prevails among them, cannot but have operated in preſerving a large part of them ſeparate from thoſe who are of a different origin. 'They 'framed regulations,' ſays the author of the Perſian abridgment, 'dividing themſelves into four claſſes.— 'The firſt is the *pure* claſs, conſiſting of thoſe, whoſe fa-

[64] See *the Aſiatic Reſearches*, 4to vol. II; or a ſmaller work, publiſhed by Nicol, entitled *Diſſertations and Miſcellaneous Pieces, relating to the Hiſt. and Antiq. the Arts, Sciences, and Liter. of Aſia*, by Sir W. Jones, &c. 8vo. vol. II. p. 128.

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'thers and mothers were Afghans[65].' The Afghans, Mr. Vanſittart obſerves, have been ſubject to the kings of Perſia[66], as well as to the princes of Hindoſtan.

That the ten tribes were tranſported into ſome of the provinces of the Perſian empire, is univerſally admitted[67]; and that they continued there for a conſiderable time, and were very numerous, cannot be doubted. Now as we know them to have been expoſed in that empire, at different periods, to oppreſſion and the ſevereſt calamities[68]; it certainly does ſeem reaſonable to conclude, independently of any poſitive teſtimonies which may be alleged on the ſubject, that conſiderable numbers of them, in order to eſcape from the fury of perſecution, would enter and inhabit one or both of the two adjoining countries of Tartary and India, where their ſettlement would be favoured by the facility with which revolutions were affected, and by the comparatively ſmall power, which the princes of thoſe countries, from

[65] See *the Diſſertations*, &c. p. 119—128. The Afghans, ſays Mr. Hanway, 'have an utter averſion againſt marrying their daughters to ſtrangers.' Hiſt. of the Revolutions of Perſia, vol. III. p. 43.

[66] At the beginning of the preſent century, the province of Kandahar, which the Afghans inhabited, was ſubject to Perſia. Oppreſſed and plundered in the moſt outrageous manner by the Perſian governor, and the licentious troops whom he commanded, the Afghans in the year 1709 rebelled, and ſucceeded in erecting that province into a ſmall but independent monarchy. In the year 1722 the Afghans penetrated to the heart of the Perſian empire; and, having defeated an army of nearly 50,000 Perſians, and obtained poſſeſſion of Iſpahan, the prince of the Afghans aſcended the throne of Perſia. In the year 1726 the Porte having declared war againſt the Afghan king of that country, the Afghans defeated an army of between 70 and 80,000 Turks. But the Afghans, in the year 1729, were defeated by the celebrated Kouli Khan, and expelled from Perſia. For theſe facts ſee Hanway's Account of the Revolutions in Perſia, vol. III. p. 22—255; and vol. IV. p. 1—40.

[67] See bp. Newton, vol. I. p. 206, 207.

[68] See Baſnage's Hiſt. of the Jews.

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the ſmallneſs of their territories, frequently poſſeſſed. That they would gradually be induced to corrupt the purity of the Jewiſh worſhip, to embrace heatheniſm, and afterwards to acknowledge a belief in the divine miſſion of Mahomet, ſeems alſo extremely probable; powerfully led to it, as they would be, by motives of policy and the contagion of example, by ignorance of letters, and their total ſeparation from their brethren in Turkey and in Europe. To theſe concluſions the preceding extracts are doubtleſs favourable; nor are they unſupported by the teſtimonies of other writers.

The quotation that follows is from biſhop Law. At the termination of the captivity of the Jews at Babylon, 'the greateſt part of them, and thoſe of the greateſt eminence, ſtaid behind, and ſettled in Chaldea, Aſſyria, 'and other Eaſtern provinces;—whence it is probable, 'that ſome of their deſcendants ſpread ſo far as the Eaſt-'Indies, where their poſterity continue to this day; as 'appears from the accounts of *many* modern travellers[69].'

As the ſubject is curious, ſome of theſe accounts, though certainly not exempt from error, may perhaps deſerve to be collected, and to be briefly noticed. That the Afghans are thoſe, to whom ſome of theſe travellers refer, can hardly be doubted.

The learned Mr. Jacob Bryant, ſpeaking of a colony of Jews at Cochin upon the coaſt of Malabar, ſays, they 'came there according to Hamilton[70] as early as the 'captivity under Nebuchadnezzar. Thus much is cer-'tain, the æra is ſo far back, that they know not now 'the time of their arrival.—They conſiſted formerly of '80,000 families: but are now reduced to 4000. Mr. 'Bate, a clergyman, who had a ſon in the Eaſt Indies,

[69] Law's *Theory of Religion*, 3d. ed. p. 140.

[70] Account of the Eaſt Indies, c. xxvi. p. 323.

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'made application to have ſome particulars of their hiſ-
'tory. "I wrote[71] over to the coaſt of Malabar, to
"know what tradition the Jews have retained, as to the
"time of their ſettlement at Cochin, but had no ſatiſ-
"factory anſwer. Ezekiel, the Rabbin of the ſyna-
"gogue, did, indeed, ſend me a tranſcript of their cop-
"per plate, hung up in their ſynagogue. It is written
"in the Malabar language, put into common Hebrew
"characters; interlined with a literal verſion in He-
"brew[72]". This account, it is manifeſt, does not re-late to the Afghans. But it may be obſerved, that it is at leaſt a poſſible caſe, that of the Jews who emigrated from Perſia a ſmall portion might, like their brethren of Europe, ſteadily adhere to the religion of Moſes.

The extract which follows is from Bernier's deſcription of Hindoſtan. Bernier was a learned Frenchman, who reſided twelve years at the court of the Great Mogul, and in the year 1664 accompanied him in his journey to the ſmall kingdom of Kachemire or Caſhmire; a country very rarely viſited by Europeans, as it is ſituated at the extremity of Hindoſtan, borders upon Tartary and upon Perſia, and is extremely difficult of acceſs, being ſhut up and almoſt inſulated by the mountains of Caucaſus[73]. In anſwer to ſome inquiries made by that induſtrious traveller, M. Thevenot, whether there were Jews in the kingdom of Caſhmere, and whether they were poſſeſſed

[71] 'Bate's Rationale, p. 223. Maffeius in his Indian Hiſtory ſpeaks 'of thoſe Jews, as being in great numbers at Cochin.—See his Hiſt. Lib. 'XVI. p. 332.'

[72] Bryant upon the Authenticity of the Scriptures, and the Truth of the Chr. Rel. p. 273.

[73] In order to form an accurate idea of the ſingularly inſulated ſituation of Caſhmere, ſee the Map of the South Eaſt part of Aſia, prefixed to Dr. Robertſon's Hiſt. Diſq. on India; or major Rennel's map of the Countries between the Sources of the Ganges and the Caſpian Sea; or the map of Caſhmere in the ſecond volume of the *Voyages de Bernier*.

of the writings of the Old Teſtament; Bernier informs him, that if there have in that country been thoſe who have profeſſed Judaiſm, 'as there is ſome reaſon to believe, there are none now remaining,' but 'that all 'the inhabitants are either Pagans or Mahometans.—Nevertheleſs one cannot fail of finding there many marks 'of Judaiſm. The *firſt* is, that on entering this kingdom, after having paſſed the mountains of Pire-penjale, 'all the inhabitants that I ſaw in the firſt villages appeared to me to be Jews in their air and deportment, 'and moreover in that indefinable peculiarity, which 'enables us to diſtinguiſh one nation from another[74]. I 'am not the only perſon, who has been of that opinion; 'our father, the Jeſuit, and many of us Europeans have 'entertained it before me. The *ſecond* is, that I have 'remarked, that among the lower ranks of people in 'this town[75], although Mahometans, yet the name of 'Mouſa, which ſignifies Moſes, is very much in uſe. 'The *third* is, they commonly ſay, that Solomon came 'into their country, and that it was he who cut through 'the mountain of Baramoulé to give a free paſſage to 'the waters. The *fourth*, that Moſes died at Caſhmere, 'and that his tomb is one league diſtant from this town. 'The *fifth*, that they pretend, that that little and very 'ancient edifice, which appears from this place upon an 'high mountain, was built by Solomon, and that it is for 'that reaſon, that to this very day they call it *the throne 'of Solomon*. Therefore I would not deny, that ſome 'Jews have penetrated hither. Theſe people, in the

[74] Speaking in another place of the inhabitants of Caſhmere, he ſays, 'they are celebrated for their fine complexion. They are as well made as 'we Europeans: at the ſame time having nothing of the countenance of 'the Tartar, with his flat noſe, and little pig's eyes.' *Voyages de Francois Bernier*, tom. II. p. 281.

[75] The town of Caſhmere, I apprehend.

lapſe

'lapſe of time, may have loſt the purity of their law; have 'become idolaters, and at length Mahometans[76].'

'The race of the Afghans,' ſays the Perſian writer tranſlated by Mr. Vanſittart, 'poſſeſſed themſelves of 'the mountain of Solomon, which is near Kandahar[77], 'and the circumjacent country, where they have built 'forts.' And Mr. Vanſittart adds, 'the country of the 'Afghans, which is a province of Cabul, was originally 'called Roh, and from hence is derived the name of 'Rohillahs[78]. The city, which was eſtabliſhed in it by 'the Afghans, was called by them Paiſhwer, or Paiſhor, 'and is now the name of the whole diſtrict[79].' It is worthy of obſervation, that the city of Kandahar ſtands on the very frontier of Perſia; that not only the province of that name, but alſo that of Cabul, is on the borders of the Perſian empire; and that the former of theſe provinces is adjacent to the kingdom of Caſhmere, and that the latter immediately joins it. With reſpect to the city of Paiſhwer, a principal reſidence of the Afghans, the maps of Hindoſtan aſcertain its vicinity to Caſhmere.

[76] *Voyages de Francois Bernier, docteur en Medecine de la Faculte de Montpellier; contenant la deſcription des Etats du Grand Mogol.* Amſterdam, 1723, tom. II. p. 316. Bernier was a man of penetration, and greatly ſuperior to the general maſs of travellers. Accordingly Mr. Gibbon (vol. I. p. 333), when ſpeaking of his journey to the kingdom of Caſhmere and of the camp of Aurengzebe, ſays, 'that moſt curious traveller Bernier— 'deſcribes with great accuracy the immenſe moving city.' And it is obſerved by major Rennel (*Mem. of a Map of Hindoſtan*, p. 66), that Bernier 'deſerves the greateſt credit for veracity.'

[77] That 'the Afghans originally inhabited the mountainous tract lying 'between India and Perſia, or the ancient Paropamiſus,' is the ſtatement of major Rennel. Memoir of a Map of Hindoſtan, pref. p. 48.

[78] Of the Rohilla nation, who are a part of the Afghans, and who inhabited the beautiful province of Rohilcund, a conſiderable part were cruelly extirpated in a war undertaken by the inſtigation of Mr. Haſtings.

[79] See the Aſiatic Reſearches, or Diſſertations, ut Supra.

After introducing extracts from Bernier and Bryant, Vanſittart and Sir W. Jones, it may, perhaps, not be improper briefly to notice the ſtatements of three celebrated Jewiſh writers, Benjamin of Tudela, Eldad, and Peritſul of Ferrara, though their narratives, it muſt be admitted, have ſo great a mixture of what is fabulous and untrue, that they deſerve not attention any farther than they are ſupported by other writers and by independent evidence. Benjamin, ſays Baſnage, was 'a famous tra-'veller of the 12th century, who ſeems to have under-'taken his voyage only to diſcover the ſtate of his diſ-'perſed nation in all parts of the world.—His teſtimony '*ſeems* to be the more authentic, becauſe he ſpeaks as an 'eye-witneſs, and relates what he had ſeen.' Eldad, who is ſuppoſed to have lived in the 13th century, wrote largely on the hiſtory of the twelve tribes. Peritſul was a geographical writer of the 16th century. Benjamin relates, that, in the courſe of his travels in the Eaſt Indies, he met with a very conſiderable number of his countrymen; that there were, as he was informed, 20,000 Jews intermingled with the Pagan worſhippers of fire; and that a nation of Jews was ſeated in the neighbourhood of Perſia, ſecured by the mountains which ſurrounded them, and independent of the power of that country. After relating that four of the Jewiſh tribes migrated beyond the rivers of Chaldea, and that they lived in a great degree after the manner of the Tartars, accompanied by their flocks, and dwelling in tents; Eldad aſſerts, that of the tribe of Iſſachar, which was ſubject to the Perſians, a part conformed to ſome of the laws of the country, and that fire was the object of their religious adoration. And that colonies of Jews were planted along the ſhores of the Ganges, is the ſtatement of Peritſul[80].

[80] See Baſnage's Hiſt. of the Jews, b. VI. ch. 2, 3.

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The author of a ſupplemental diſſertation, inſerted in Picart's elaborate work, on *the Ceremonies and Religious Cuſtoms of the Various Nations of the World*, after referring to the relations of Benjamin and of Peritſul, ſays, 'ſuppoſing it was true, that there ever was a 'Jewiſh ſettlement in thoſe countries, we might very 'juſtly conjecture, that they were the remainder of the 'ten tribes. Gulielmus de Rubruquis[81], who travelled 'into Tartary in the year 1646, aſſures us, that about two 'day's journey beyond Derbent, on the road to Great 'Tartary, he met with a great number of Jews in a city 'called Samaron; and he mentions likewiſe an incloſed 'country towards the Caſpian ſea, where the Jews were 'confined. Carpin[82], who travelled at the ſame time, 'gives us likewiſe an account of ſome of the Jews of 'Tartary[83].'

Indeed Baſnage informs us, that 'there are chiefly 'two opinions, that have been current with the Jews,' and the Chriſtians, and that one of theſe opinions is this, 'that the ten tribes went into Tartary, in which are 'ſtill obſerved ſome traces of ancient Judaiſm.' Menaſſeh, who was one of the wiſeſt of the Jewiſh doctors, 'in the laſt century aſſerted the tranſmigration of 'the ten tribes into Tartary.' And 'Ortelius, that ingenious geographer, in giving the deſcription of Tartary, 'notes the kingdom of Arſareth, where the ten tribes 'retiring ſucceeded the Scythian inhabitants[84].'

Theſe opinions, it is proper to ſtate, obtained not the approbation of Baſnage himſelf. There are, he ſays, Jews diſperſed in the Eaſt Indies: but they are not de-

[81] P. 272, edit. of Paris. [82] P. 377.

[83] Bernard Picart's *Ceremonies and Religious Cuſtoms of the Various Nations of the Known World*, fol. 1733, vol. I. p. 166.

[84] Hiſt. of the Jews, p. 474.

ſcendants of the ten tribes, but merchants, drawn thither by commerce. 'If we would ſeek out the remains 'of the ten tribes, we muſt do it only on the banks of 'the Euphrates, in Perſia, and the neighbouring pro-'vinces[85].' The accounts reſpecting the emigration of Jews into Tartary or India are doubtleſs intermingled with much which is fabulous and wild[86]: but perhaps there is ground for concluding, that Baſnage, engaged as he was in the compoſition of a work which involved a vaſt variety of inquiries, was too haſty in peremptorily rejecting the whole of theſe accounts, and that, notwithſtanding his very extenſive knowledge of the Jewiſh diſperſions, he was on this point not ſufficiently careful in ſeparating probability from fiction. Information on the ſubject from Oriental writers it muſt, indeed, be admitted, he had not an opportunity of procuring.

That a large body of the Jews ſhould ſettle on the borders of Hindoſtan, is much more probable, than that they ſhould inhabit any diſtrict of Tartary. But even with reſpect to the latter ſtatement, the reaſoning of Baſnage, is not, I think, eminently concluſive. How improbable is it, ſays the author of the Hiſtory of the Jews, that a handful of fugitives, ſhould be able to conquer and 'expel the Scythians, a people terrible for their fierce-'neſs and expence in war.' And he immediately after exclaims, what a ſpecimen of romantic folly 'would it 'be, to leave a tolerably good country, to go and make 'conqueſts upon the Scythians[87].' That the Perſian Jews ſhould conquer the Scythians, is certainly incredible; but that they ſhould defeat ſome particular Tartar hordes is not impoſſible. That they ſhould draw the

[85] P. 747.

[86] Poſtel, Baſnage informs us (p. 474), ſtated the Turks to be *deſcended* from the Jews.

[87] P. 479.

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ſword againſt any of the ſhepherds of Tartary is not, however, a neceſſary ſuppoſition. Their country is of vaſt magnitude; and who does not know, that myriads of its wandering inhabitants have frequently emigrated, and invaded ſome civilized nation of the globe? Surely, then, there is no difficulty in ſuppoſing, that a conſiderable part of the Jews of Perſia might diſcover and occupy a portion of vacant land, equal in point of extent to all their wants. Nor is there any thing abſurd in their abandoning Perſia, cruelly perſecuted as they often were by the prince and the people of that country.

It is obſervable that Moſes ſays, *the Lord ſhall ſcatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou ſhall ſerve other Gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and ſtone*[88]. 'And is it not,' aſks bp. Newton[89], 'too common for the Jews in popiſh countries to comply with the idolatrous worſhip of the church of Rome, 'and to bow down to ſtocks and ſtones, rather than their 'effects ſhould be ſeized and confiſcated.' The prelate then quotes Baſnage. "The Spaniſh and Portugal Inquiſitions," ſaith he, "reduce them to the dilemma of "being either hypocrites or burnt. The number of theſe "diſſemblers is very conſiderable; and it ought not to be "concluded, that there are no Jews in Spain or Portugal, becauſe they are not known: they are ſo much "the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, "but confounded with the eccleſiaſtics, and entering "into all eccleſiaſtical dignities." And in another place he ſaith, "The moſt ſurpriſing thing is, that this religion ſpreads from generation to generation, and ſtill "ſubſiſts in the perſons of diſſemblers in a remote poſterity. In vain the great lords of Spain make alliances,

[88] Deut. XXVIII, 64. [89] Vol. I. p. 196.

ſcendants of the ten tribes, but merchants, drawn thither by commerce. 'If we would ſeek out the remains 'of the ten tribes, we muſt do it only on the banks of 'the Euphrates, in Perſia, and the neighbouring pro-'vinces[85].' The accounts reſpecting the emigration of Jews into Tartary or India are doubtleſs intermingled with much which is fabulous and wild[86]: but perhaps there is ground for concluding, that Baſnage, engaged as he was in the compoſition of a work which involved a vaſt variety of inquiries, was too haſty in peremptorily rejecting the whole of theſe accounts, and that, notwithſtanding his very extenſive knowledge of the Jewiſh diſperſions, he was on this point not ſufficiently careful in ſeparating probability from fiction. Information on the ſubject from Oriental writers it muſt, indeed, be admitted, he had not an opportunity of procuring.

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[85] P. 747.

[86] Poſtel, Baſnage informs us (p. 474), ſtated the Turks to be *deſcended* from the Jews.

[87] P. 479.

ſword

ſword againſt any of the ſhepherds of Tartary is not, however, a neceſſary ſuppoſition. Their country is of vaſt magnitude; and who does not know, that myriads of its wandering inhabitants have frequently emigrated, and invaded ſome civilized nation of the globe? Surely, then, there is no difficulty in ſuppoſing, that a conſiderable part of the Jews of Perſia might diſcover and occupy a portion of vacant land, equal in point of extent to all their wants. Nor is there any thing abſurd in their abandoning Perſia, cruelly perſecuted as they often were by the prince and the people of that country.

It is obſervable that Moſes ſays, *the Lord ſhall ſcatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou ſhalt ſerve other Gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and ſtone*[88]. 'And is it not,' aſks bp. Newton[89], 'too common for the Jews in popiſh countries to comply with the idolatrous worſhip of the church of Rome, 'and to bow down to ſtocks and ſtones, rather than their 'effects ſhould be ſeized and confiſcated.' The prelate then quotes Baſnage. "The Spaniſh and Portugal Inquiſitions," ſaith he, "reduce them to the dilemma of "being either hypocrites or burnt. The number of theſe "diſſemblers is very conſiderable; and it ought not to be "concluded, that there are no Jews in Spain or Portugal, becauſe they are not known: they are ſo much "the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, "but confounded with the eccleſiaſtics, and entering "into all eccleſiaſtical dignities." And in another place he ſaith, "The moſt ſurpriſing thing is, that this religion ſpreads from generation to generation, and ſtill "ſubſiſts in the perſons of diſſemblers in a remote poſterity. In vain the great lords of Spain make alliances,

[88] Deut. XXVIII, 64. [89] Vol. I. p. 196.

" change their names, and take ancient ſcutcheons;
" they are ſtill known to be of Jewiſh race, and Jews
" themſelves. The convents of monks and nuns are
" full of them. Moſt of the canons, inquiſitors, and bi-
" ſhops proceed from this nation. This is enough to
" make the people and clergy of this country tremble,
" ſince ſuch ſort of churchmen can only profane the ſa-
" craments, and want intention in conſecrating the hoſt
" they adore. In the mean time Orobio, who relates
" the fact, knew theſe diſſemblers. He was one of them
" himſelf, and bent the knee before the ſacrament.
" Moreover he brings proofs of his aſſertion, in main-
" taining, that there are in the ſynagogue of Amſterdam
" brothers and ſiſters and near relations to good families
" of Spain and Portugal; and even Franciſcan monks,
" Dominicans, and Jeſuits, who come to do penance,
" and make amends for the crime they have committed
" in diſſembling[90]." This is the whole of what bp. Newton has alleged in illuſtration of the prophecy, which I have juſt cited from Deuteronomy. It is not, I think, completely ſatisfactory; for the fact is, that the Jews, who are ſcattered among the nations of Europe, have upon the whole adhered with uncommon ſteadineſs to the faith of their anceſtors. In order then to remove the difficulty, I would obſerve, that this prediction has principally received its fulfilment in the apoſtaſy of the deſcendants of the ten tribes, who have diſappeared from the eyes of the world; and it may be remarked, that the Afghans, previouſly to their embracing of Mahometaniſm, were, as there is reaſon to believe, debaſed by the practice of idolatry and of heathen ſuperſtitions.

Agreeably to this Dr. Prieſtley, when ſpeaking of another prediction, which relates to the Jews abandoning

[90] Baſnage, book VII. ch. 21, ſect. 26; and ch. 33. ſect. 14.

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the religion of their anceſtors, ſays, this prophecy has moſt literally 'been fulfilled in the ten tribes, few of whom 'ever returned to Paleſtine, and not being at preſent 'diſtinguiſhed from other nations, they have, no doubt, 'adopted their idolatrous religions. It is not impro-'bable, however, but that they ſomewhere form a diſtinct 'people, and that in due time their origin may be diſ-'covered. Some traces of them have of late appeared.' This celebrated writer immediately adds in a note, it is 'with conſiderable probability,' that Sir William Jones 'conjectures, that the Afghans, a people living between 'Perſia and Hindoſtan, are of Iſraelitiſh extraction[91].'

With reſpect to the Afghans, I ſhall only farther add, that *ſhould* this conjecture relative to them hereafter *be* proved to be a fact, it would not be very difficult to account for its having lain ſo many centuries in concealment. The following circumſtances would, perhaps, afford a ſolution of the difficulty. Till *very lately* the gaining of territory, the acquiſition of riches, and the opportunity of living with profuſion and ſplendor, are the objects which have *ſolely* occupied the minds of the Europeans of Hindoſtan; and, in the purſuit of *theſe*, it muſt be admitted, they have diſcovered no want of eagerneſs, and no unneceſſary ſcruples with reſpect to the means of obtaining them. Recent is the period when the literary treaſures of Hindoſtan began to be ſought after with any degree of activity; and ſmall is the number of perſons, who have applied to Hindu and Perſic literature. The mountainous regions at the extremity of Hindoſtan, where was the proper ſeat of the Afghans, intelligent and inquiſitive Europeans have ſcarcely viſited at all: ſhould a ſmall number be found to have done this, they were very imperfectly acquainted with

[91] Diſc. on the Evi. of Rev. Rel. 1794. p. 216.

the

the ordinary language of the country: and of the Puſhto or Afghan language Europeans have ſcarcely had the ſlighteſt knowledge. Laſtly, the Afghans have kept their origin enveloped in ſtudied obſcurity.

If the nation of the Jews do periſh in their preſent ſtate of wretchedneſs, 'the Holy Spirit,' ſays Jurieu, 'hath deceived this nation, all their oracles are falſe, 'and God hath borne them up with vain hopes.' But this is a ſuppoſition, which it is almoſt irreverend to name. 'The Meſſiah,' ſays the French divine, 'belongs to the Jews, he was promiſed to the Jews; this 'nation from its very original hath been fed with the 'hopes of the Meſſiah's *coming*, as of ſuch a good, 'which was too great to be deſcribed. At laſt he comes; 'and this people, inſtead of ſeeing thoſe great promiſes 'accompliſhed, ſee their temple burnt, their capital 'city razed, their ſervice aboliſhed, their poſterity diſ-'perſed throughout the world, and made the execration 'and contempt of mankind. Thus the Meſſiah, the glory 'of their nation, brings them nothing but ſhame, deſo-'lation, and infinite miſeries, which have no parallel 'in any other people[92].' That ſuch will be the final reſult of events, can ſurely never be believed. That we have hitherto ſeen only a partial accompliſhment of the divine purpoſes, with reſpect to this people, is a concluſion to which the believer is compelled to reſort. 'The ſtatement of Vitringa may, however, be perfectly correct, that the Jews will remain undiſtinguiſhed by any peculiar privileges[93].

The literal fulfilment of the 'prophecies concerning 'the calamities, and total diſperſion of the Iſraelites, 'muſt,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'ſatisfy that nation, and in 'time all mankind, that Moſes was inſpired in delivering

[92] Vol. II. p. 298. [93] In Apoc. p. 436.

them

'them.—His other prophecies concerning their future 'reſtoration, and flouriſhing ſtate, are as diſtinct and 'expreſs as thoſe concerning their calamities, and far 'more numerous. They are not only contained in Mo-'ſes, but the favourite ſubject is reſumed, enlarged upon, 'and ſet in a thouſand different lights, by Iſaiah and 'moſt of the ſucceeding prophets.' They are 'equally 'clear and free from ambiguity, ſo that there can be no 'doubt concerning their meaning, and conſequently, if 'we believe in revelation, concerning their literal ac-'compliſhment[94].'

There are ſome, however, who will probably object, that it is altogether unreaſonable to expect, that the period will ever arrive, when any conſiderable number of the Jews, unceaſingly as their deſires are fixed on the means of acquiring a ſubſiſtence or augmenting a fortune, deeply as they are involved in the concerns of trade or the perplexities of commerce, ſhould ſeriouſly turn their thoughts to a departure from their reſpective countries, and conſent to abandon all thoſe ſources of wealth to which they have been accuſtomed to recur. This objection is coloured by a certain degree of plauſibility. But it may be aſked, does it correſpond with paſt experience? Is it true, in point of fact, that the Jews have ceaſed to place a confidence in the prophecies of their future reſtoration? Is it true, that, ſince their expulſion from Judea, their minds have become reconciled to baniſhment? Is there reaſon to believe, that they have forgotten the country, whence they derive their origin, and where their forefathers once enjoyed ſuch diſtinguiſhed privileges? Have they, during the period of their diſperſion, felt no fond deſires of reentering the borders of Paleſtine, and of raiſing the

[94] Diſc. on the Evid. of Rev. Rel. p. 216.

ſtandard

ſtandard of national independence?—The fact is far otherwiſe. Inſtead of not being influenced at all by theſe hopes, inſtead of not paying a reaſonable degree of attention to the ſacred oracles which promiſe their reſtoration at ſome future time, they have often ruſhed into the contrary extreme, and have been ready to liſten with an exceſs of credulity to every impoſtor, however ſlender his pretenſions, provided he held out to them the expectation of a return to the country of their anceſtors.

In order to prove this aſſertion, I ſhall, as the ſubject is curious, give a compreſſed account of ſome of the falſe Meſſias and impoſtors, who have appeared at different periods ſubſequent to the demolition of Jeruſalem by Titus.

About 50 years after that event, Barcochebas was acknowledged by the Jews for the Meſſiah; and, having enliſted forces to the amount of 200,000 men, declared war againſt the emperor Hadrian. Animated by enthuſiaſm, and confiding in his lofty pretenſions, the Jews, under his conduct, diſplayed ſignal valour; and repeatedly defeated the Roman general, Rufus. So great, indeed, was the ſlaughter of the Romans, that the emperor, in his letters to the ſenate, was induced to withhold his accuſtomed ſalutations; and we are told by the hiſtorian Dion, that, in the war with Hadrian, 580,000 Jews were deſtroyed by the ſword, beſides an immenſe number who periſhed by fire, by hunger, and by diſeaſe. The iſland of Crete, and the year 434, furniſhed an almoſt incredible inſtance of credulity. In this year appeared Moſes Cretenſis, who not only pretended to be appointed by heaven to be the leader of the Jews; but promiſed that he would divide the ſea, and, after having opened a paſſage through its waters, would conduct them in ſafety to the land of Judea: and he not only obtained a great multitude

multitude of followers; but procured their aſſent to the full extent of his promiſes, and ſucceeded in making them prepare for their departure. The citizens abandoned their houſes, and the huſbandmen their farms; and repaired to a promontory, to which the Cretan enthuſiaſt had directed their ſteps. When arrived there, the frantic multitude felt no diminution of confidence or of courage. The men, the women, and the children, who occupied the foremoſt ranks, did, the contemporary hiſtorian Socrates aſſures us, precipitate themſelves from the promontory and plunge into the ſea. Of theſe deluded Jews a part were drowned; a part were ſaved by ſome Chriſtian fiſhermen, who happened to be near the ſhore in their barks; and the enthuſiaſm of the remainder was effectually cooled by the bad ſucceſs of this ſingular experiment. With reſpect to Moſes Cretenſis himſelf, his fate was not certainly known.

In the year 529, the Jews and Samaritans of Paleſtine, riſing in rebellion againſt the Roman power, acknowledged one Julian, as their king and their meſſiah; and a great number of them were in conſequence ſlaughtered. It was alſo in the 6th century, that rabbi Meir aroſe, and pretended that the Deity had, on his account, miraculouſly lighted up a pillar of fire. Aſſembling a body of troops, he declared war againſt the Perſian monarch, and experienced ſeven years of ſucceſs: but at length was taken priſoner by the Perſians and put to death. In the 8th century, the character of the Meſſiah was aſſumed by the Jew Serenus. Multitudes of the Jews of Spain ſubmitted themſelves to his guidance; and many of them, for the purpoſe of accompanying the impoſtor to Paleſtine, abandoned their eſtates.

But no period has been ſo fruitful in Jewiſh impoſtors as the 12th century. It was in France, and in the year 1137, that the firſt of them appeared. In conſequence, many

many of the Jews were killed, and many of their ſynagogues levelled with the ground. In the following year the Eaſt was diſturbed by a falſe Meſſiah, who collected ſo formidable an army, as to march in order of battle againſt the king of Perſia, and to induce that powerful prince to purchaſe the return of tranquillity by the payment of a very conſiderable ſum of money. Short, however, was the period of this impoſtor's proſperity. In the year 1157 the Jews of Spain liſtened to the tales of a native of Corduba and a claimant to the title of the Meſſiah; and fatal were the conſequences of their credulity, for it brought down upon them the ſeverities of a general perſecution. Ten years afterwards, another of theſe impoſtors appeared in the kingdom of Fez; and in the ſame year, the year 1167, an Arabian Jew, who ſtyled himſelf the forerunner of the Meſſiah, was admired and followed by multitudes of the Jews of Arabia. Not long after this, vaſt numbers of the Jews who dwelt beyond the Euphrates yielded up their reaſon in favour of an enthuſiaſt, who laid claim to the title of the Meſſiah; and in the year 1174, the Jews of Perſia, in conſequence of the appearance of another falſe Chriſt in that country, were again expoſed to the fury of perſecution. At this period Moravia abounded with Jews, and in the year 1176 a pretended Meſſiah, of the name of David Almuſſer, excited commotions in that part of Germany. But the moſt famous impoſtor of the 12th century, and one who rendered himſelf conſpicuous towards the cloſe of it, was David el David. He was a man of learning, and a pretended worker of miracles. Perſia was the theatre of his deluſions. He ſtyled himſelf the king of the Jews; and, having gained their belief, roſe in arms againſt the Perſian monarch, and engaged to lead them back to the ancient capital of Judea. After various adventures, he was at length betrayed by his

his father-in-law, and beheaded. Of many of the Jewiſh impoſtors of the 12th century an account is to be found in the writings of Maimonides.

In the year 1222 a falſe Meſſiah appeared in Germany; and in the ſame century a multitude of the Jews of Spain were impoſed upon by Zechariah, who entitled himſelf a prophet and forerunner of the Meſſiah. In the year 1499 the ſame character was ſuſtained by rabbi Lemlem, a Jew of Auſtria, who had the credit of working miracles, and who announced to his brethren their return to the Holy Land in the year 1500. His vain predictions obtained a general reception, and many of the Jews of Germany prepared for their departure. Accordingly as they expected to be ſettled in Jeruſalem the following year, many of them pulled down their ovens, in which they baked their unleavened bread, as now ceaſing to be uſeful. Soon perceiving that he had fixed on too early a period for the fulfilment of his predictions, David Lemlem aſſerted, that the ſins of the people had retarded the appearance of the Meſſiah. Still the eyes of the Jews remained unopened: and many of them aſſembled near Jeruſalem, and celebrated a ſolemn faſt, in order that they might propitiate Jehovah, and accelerate their deliverance. At the cloſe alſo of the 15th century, Iſmael Sophy, a young prince who was in fact a Mahometan, and who afterwards aſcended the throne of Perſia, aſſumed the name of a prophet; and the Jews, dazzled by his valour and the celerity of his ſucceſſes, indulged the notion of his being their promiſed Meſſiah. In the year 1509, an infamous Jew of Cologn is ſaid to have arrogated the appellation of the Meſſiah. About the ſame time, alſo, Jacob Melſtinſki appropriated to himſelf the ſame lofty title, and, traverſing Poland and Sileſia at the head of twelve pretended apoſtles whom he had choſen, deluded multitudes of people. And in the

year

year 1534, rabbi Salomo Malcha, having declared himſelf the Meſſiah, was burnt in Spain by order of Charles the Vth.

The 17th century was ſtill more favourable to credulity, and ſtill more fruitful in impoſture. In the early part of it, a falſe Meſſiah aroſe in the Eaſt Indies and in the Portugueſe city of Goa; and deceived great numbers of the deſcendants of Abraham, who ſighed for the recovery of liberty and independence. At Amſterdam, and in the year 1624, there appeared another impoſtor, a Jew of Germany, who declared that he had ſeen the Meſſiah at Straſburgh, and announced the mighty victories he was to accompliſh.

But his fame was greatly eclipſed by Sabatai Sevi, the ſon of a poulterer of Aleppo, a man of learning, and, as there is reaſon to believe, at once a fanatic and an impoſtor. As the accounts reſpecting him, from his comparatively recent appearance, have more of copiouſneſs and authenticity, than the narratives of impoſture can commonly be known to poſſeſs, I ſhall perhaps be authorized in citing a long paſſage from biſhop Kidder, the third volume of whoſe work on *the Meſſias* was publiſhed in the year 1700, 34 or 35 years after the commencement of the impoſture of Sabatai Sevi. But long as it is, it is only a part of what the biſhop has related reſpecting him. In the year 1666, ſays the prelate, 'Sabatai Sevi appeared at Smyrna, and profeſſed himſelf 'to be the Meſſias. He promiſed the Jews deliverance 'and a proſperous kingdom. This which he promiſed 'they firmly believed; the Jews now attended to no buſi-'neſs, diſcourſed of nothing but their return. They 'believed Sabatai to be the Meſſias, as firmly as we 'Chriſtians believe any article of faith. A right reverend 'perſon then in Turkey, told me, that meeting with a 'Jew of his acquaintance at Aleppo, he aſked the Jew, what

'what he thought of Sabatai. The Jew replied, that he 'believed him to be the Meſſias, and that he was ſo far 'of that belief, that, if he ſhould prove an impoſtor, he 'would then turn Chriſtian. It will be very fit I ſhould 'be very particular in this relation, becauſe the hiſtory 'is ſo very ſurprizing and remarkable; and we have an 'account of it from thoſe, who were then in Turkey, 'and are now alive. I am ſo well ſatisfied as to the facts, 'that I dare vouch for the truth of the relation, and ap-'peal for the truth of it to very many perſons of great 'credit who are now alive.—At Gaza Sabatai preached 'repentance (together with a faith in himſelf) ſo effec-'tually, that the people gave themſelves up to their devo-'tions and alms. The noiſe of this Meſſias began to fill 'all places.—Throughout Turkey the Jews were in great 'expectation of glorious times. They now were devout 'and penitent, that they might not obſtruct the good 'which they hoped for. Some faſted ſo long that they 'were famiſhed to death; others buried themſelves in the 'earth till their limbs grew ſtiff; ſome would endure 'melted wax dropped on their fleſh; ſome rolled in the 'ſnow; others in a cold ſeaſon would put themſelves 'into cold water; and many whipped themſelves. Buſi-'neſs was laid aſide; ſuperfluities of houſehold utenſils 'were ſold; the poor were provided for by immenſe 'contributions. Sabatai comes to Smyrna, where he 'was adored by the people, though the *Chacham* contra-'dicted him, for which he was removed from his office. 'There he in writing ſtyles himſelf *the only and firſt-'born Son of God, the Meſſias, the Saviour of Iſrael.*' Whilſt the Jews in their ſynagogues had been accuſtom-ed to 'pray for the Grand Seignior, he orders thoſe 'prayers to be forborn for the future, thinking it an in-'decent thing to pray for him, who was ſhortly to be his 'captive; and, inſtead of praying for the Turkiſh em-

'peror, he appoints prayers for himſelf, as another au-
'thor relates. And, as my author goes on, he elected
'princes to govern the Jews in their march towards the
'Holy Land, and to miniſter juſtice to them when they
'ſhould be poſſeſſed of it.' After declaring that he was appointed by heaven to viſit Conſtantinople, he went thither, and was thrown into priſon by the Vizier. Still, however, 'the Jews pay him their viſits, and they of this 'city are now as much infatuated as thoſe of Smyrna. 'They forbid traffic, and refuſed to pay their debts. 'Some of our Engliſh merchants, not knowing how to 'recover their debts from the Jews, took this occaſion 'to viſit Sabatai, and make their complaints to him againſt 'his ſubjects. Whereupon he wrote this following let-'ter to the Jews:'

"*To you of the nation of the Jews, who expect the* "*appearance of the Meſſias, and the ſalvation of Iſrael,* "*peace without end. Whereas we are informed, that* "*you are indebted to ſeveral of the Engliſh nation, it* "*ſeemeth right unto us to order you to make ſatisfaction* "*to theſe your juſt debts; which if you refuſe to do, and* "*not obey us herein, know you, that then you are not to* "*enter with us into our joys and dominions.*"

'Sabatai remained a priſoner in Conſtantinople by the 'ſpace of two months. The Grand Vizier, deſigning 'for Candia, thought it not ſafe to leave him in the city, 'during the Grand Seignior's abſence and his own. He 'therefore removed him to the Dardanelli; a better air 'indeed, but yet out of the way; and conſequently im-'porting leſs danger to the city: which occaſioned the 'Jews to conclude, that the Turks could not, or durſt 'not take away his life, which had, they concluded, been 'the ſureſt way to have removed all jealouſy. The Jews 'flocked in great numbers to the caſtle where he was a 'priſoner; not only thoſe that were near, but from Po-

'land,

'land, Germany, Leghorn, Venice, and other places. 'They received Sabatai's bleſſings and promiſes of ad-'vancement.—The Jews of the city paid Sabatai Sevi 'great reſpect. They decked their ſynagogues with S. S. 'in letters of gold, and made for him, in the wall, a 'crown: they attributed the ſame titles and prophecies to 'him which we apply to our Saviour.' At length being ordered into the preſence of the Grand Seignior, and required to perform a miracle, he was obliged, in order to ſave his life, to profeſs Mahometaniſm. 'During theſe 'things, the Jews, inſtead of minding their trade and 'traffic, filled their letters with news of Sabatai, their 'Meſſias, and his wonderful works. They reported that 'when the Grand Seignior ſent to take him, he cauſed 'all the meſſengers, that were ſent, to die,' In conſequence of theſe and other reports, 'the Jews of Italy ſent 'legates to Smyrna, to inquire into the truth of theſe 'matters.'

In the year 1682 appeared rabbi Mordechai, who was famous, among his countrymen in Germany, for his attainments in learning and his auſterity of life. He laid claim to the prophetic character and to the title of the Meſſiah. By the Italian Jews he was extremely careſſed; and the genuineneſs of his credentials was admitted by them and many of the Jews of Germany. As late as the year 1703 another impoſtor, named Daniel Iſrael, deluded the Jews of Smyrna. He pretended to perform various miracles; and aſſerted, that Sabatai Sevi was ſtill alive, and would ſhortly emerge from the place of his concealment, and glorioufly deliver the Jews from their preſent ſtate of diſperſion and ignominy. Nor was he admired and followed only by the crowd, many of whom celebrated the day of the nativity of Sabatai Sevi, and anxiouſly expected his appearance: the lying declarations of this impoſtor of the 18th century were alſo vindicated and approved by

the rabbins: but, at length, he was expelled from Smyrna by the governor of that city, and great was the diſturbance, which his baniſhment occaſioned among its Jewiſh inhabitants[95].

This long narrative I ſhall conclude by obſerving, that it contains ample evidence of the fulfilment of one of the prophecies of Jeſus, *I am come in my Father's name* ſaid our Lord to the Jews, *and ye receive me not: if another ſhall come in his own name, him ye will receive*[96].

Baſnage, who wrote at the beginning of the preſent century, in the chapter which treats on *the Preſent State of the Jews*, ſays, 'They ſtill conſider themſelves with 'their ancient haughtineſs as *the people of God*.—They 'always are expecting a glorious return, which ſhall raiſe 'them above all the nations of the earth. They flatter 'themſelves, that this deliverance will ſpeedily arrive, 'though they are ignorant of the time[97].'

[95] For the facts reſpecting the Jewiſh impoſtors ſee Baſnage's Hiſtory of the Jews (p. 516, 518, 551, 564, 577, 597, 631, 633, 664, 697, 699, 701, 730, 731, 738, 757); biſhop Newton's Diſſertations on Prophecy (vol. III. p. 42); Jortin's Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory (vol. II. p. 361—366); biſhop Kidder's Demonſtration of the Meſſias (vol. III. p. 394—421); and Dion Caſſius (Leunclavii, Hanoviæ, 1606, lib. LXIX. p. 794).

[96] John v. 43. To *come in his own name*, ſays Dr. Whitby, 'is to come 'without commiſſion or teſtimony from God.' Of Dr. Clarke's paraphraſe on theſe words the following is the principal part. 'Ye reject me, 'I ſay, principally for this very reaſon, becauſe I ſeek not temporal in'tereſts, neither ſet up myſelf as the head of a ſect in the way of worldly 'pride and ambition; but preach to you plainly in the name of God my 'Father.—If another ſhould come, pretending himſelf to be the Meſſias; 'though without any of that evidence of divine authority, which I have 'brought along with me; and ſhould ſet up himſelf to be a great perſon; 'promiſing you for your ſervice worldly power and dignity, and ſuffering 'you quietly to go on in your vices; *him* you would entertain and follow 'with all eagerneſs.'

[97] P. 748.

On

On the ſtate of the Jews in the laſt century, and there is no reaſon to believe that it is greatly altered, I ſhall quote the words of Luzzati, a rabbi who taught at Venice in that century. "It is a difficult thing," ſays Luzzati, "to give an exact account of the number of the "Jews, who are at preſent diſperſed into ſo many "places. We cannot tell any certain news of the ten "tribes Salmanazar carried away; and it is not known "where they are, though the whole world be ſufficiently "known. To begin with the Eaſt. We know, that "there are abundance of Jews in the kingdom of Per-"ſia, though they have but little liberty. The Turkiſh "empire is their chief retreat, not only becauſe they "have been ſettled there a long time, but becauſe a great "many of thoſe that were baniſhed out of Spain retired "thither. There are more of them at Conſtantinople "and Salonichi, than in any other place. They reckon "above fourſcore thouſand in theſe two cities, and about "a million in the Grand Seignior's empire. A great "number of pilgrims come from all corners of the world "to Jeruſalem, and conſiderable ſums are ſent thither "to ſuſtain the poor, and keep up the academies. "There are a great many of them in Germany in the em-"peror's dominions; but they are more numerous in "Poland, Lithuania, and Ruſſia: here we have acade-"mies and diſciples by thouſands, who ſtudy our civil and "canon laws, becauſe we are allowed the privilege of "judging the civil and criminal caſes, that happen in "the nation. There are not ſo many Jews in the Pro-"teſtant ſtates which ſeparate from the Roman church; "but yet they treat them with a great deal of charity and "indulgence in the low countries; at Rotterdam, Am-"ſterdam, and Hambourg, becauſe theſe merchandizing "cities are open to foreigners. All the Italian princes "receive the Jews, countenance them, protect them,

" and inviolably maintain their privileges without alter-
" ing them; and I believe there are not leſs than 25,000
" in this country. Fez, and Morocco, and the other
" neighbouring cities, which are not ſubject to the Turk,
" contain the greater numbers, becauſe they are not re-
" mote from Spain or Portugal, from whence they may
" retire thither. There are other places upon the coaſt
" of Africa, which are alſo peopled with Jews; but, as we
" know but little of them, it is hard to fix the number[98]."

The Jews, ſays biſhop Law, 'are univerſally believed
'to be more numerous in the whole at preſent, than they
'have ever been in their moſt flouriſhing eſtate, in their
'own land[99].'

'Some appearances,' ſays Dr. Worthington, 'indicate
'a working towards their converſion and reſtoration.
'Dr. Jackſon[100] obſerves, " that the continuation of their
" former plagues ſeemeth much interrupted," and " the
" plagues themſelves much mitigated, in this laſt age,
" ſince the goſpel hath been again revealed, as if their
" miſery were almoſt expired, and the day of their *re-*
" *demption drawing nigh.*" On the other hand, they do
'not ſhew that extreme malice towards Chriſtians, nor
'Chriſtians that hatred of them, which they formerly
'exerciſed towards each other. The good uſage, which,
'in theſe latter ages, they have met with from Chriſtians,
'hath undoubtedly abated their prejudices, and conci-
'liated their minds to them; and a continuance of the
'ſame juſtice and lenity may, with God's bleſſing, con-
'tribute greatly to prepare them, for, and by degrees
'bring about, their converſion[101].'

[98] *Simon Luzzati Diſcorzo circa il ſtato degli Hebrei*, c. 18. The quotation above is immediately taken from the Engliſh tranſlation of Baſnage's *Hiſtory of the Jews*, p. 744.

[99] Law's *Theory of Religion*, 3d ed. p. 164.

[100] Dr. Th. Jackſon's Works, vol. I. p. 153.

[101] Dr. Worthington, vol. II. p. 64.

Though

Though theſe obſervations of Dr. Worthington are upon the whole correct; we are not, I conceive, authorized in ſpeaking of 'the good uſage,' which the followers of Moſes have experienced from the diſciples of Chriſt during 'theſe latter ages.' The treatment of the former, either from governments or from individuals, has not, till very lately, been in any degree mild or liberal. Even of thoſe whoſe prejudices have been ſoftened by literature, not a few have been diſpoſed to keep the poſterity of Abraham, ſtill loaded with ſhackles, and ſtill diſcouraged by depreſſion. In the laſt chapter of the laſt volume of his *Demonſtration of the Meſſias*[102], biſhop Kidder has interſperſed ſome obſervations relative to the means of converting the Jews; but, of the methods which he ſpecifies, ſome are very ill adapted to accompliſh the intended effect. He recommends, that the Jews ſhould be compelled occaſionally to attend at places of Chriſtian worſhip, and to hear the ſermons preached there; that they ſhould be obliged to engage in conferences with Chriſtian divines; that they ſhould not 'have the liberty to uſe what prayers they pleaſe' in their ſynagogues; that the government ſhould force the richer Jews to maintain their poorer brethren, as they have been uſed to do, though they ſhould reject Judaiſm and embrace Chriſtianity; and that the Jews ſhould continue to be excluded from places of honour and power, and from enjoying the freedom of the preſs. Accordingly having obſerved, that rabbi Aben Amram complained greatly, that the Jews poſſeſſed not 'the liberty of the 'preſs;' he is careful to clear himſelf from the moſt diſtant imputation of being an advocate, for their uſing ſo horrid an engine as the preſs; a far more miſchievous diſcovery, in the eyes of civil tyrants and intereſted pre-

[102] This volume was publiſhed in the year 1700.

lates, than that of gun-powder, or any the moſt deſtructive invention, which the boldeſt flight of the human imagination can conceive. 'Far be it from me,' ſays the biſhop, 'for pleading for any ſuch liberty as that.' And he afterwards adds, that it is undoubtedly 'a very great 'favour in Chriſtian kings and ſtates to permit the Jews 'to live in their ſeveral kingdoms and countries without 'diſturbance;' and that 'nothing can be more adviſeable 'than to keep them low[103].'

Dr. Hartley, in addition to the arguments from prophecy which he has alleged to prove, that the Jews will return to Paleſtine, notices ſome concurring evidences, which the exiſting circumſtances of that people ſuggeſt. After obſerving in the *Firſt* place, that they 'are yet a *diſtinct* people from all the nations amongſt which they reſide; he ſays, '*Secondly*, they are to be found in all 'the countries of the known world. And this agrees 'with many remarkable paſſages of the ſcriptures, which 'treat both of their diſperſion and of their return. *Third-*'*ly*, they have no inheritance of land in any country. 'Their poſſeſſions are chiefly money and jewels. They 'may, therefore, transfer themſelves with the greater faci-'lity to Paleſtine. *Fourthly*, they are treated with con-'tempt and harſhneſs, and ſometimes with great cruelty, 'by the nations amongſt whom they ſojourn. They muſt 'therefore be the more ready to return to their own 'land. *Fifthly*, they carry on a correſpondence with 'each other throughout the whole world; and conſe-'quently muſt both know when circumſtances begin to 'favour their return, aud be able to concert meaſures 'with one another concerning it. *Sixthly*, a great part 'of them ſpeak and write the rabbinical Hebrew, as well 'as the language of the country where they reſide. They

[103] Vol. III. p. 455—487.

are

'are therefore, as far as relates to themſelves, actually 'poſſeſſed of an univerſal language and character; which 'is a circumſtance that may facilitate their return, beyond 'what can well be imagined. *Seventhly*, the Jews them-'ſelves ſtill retain a hope and expectation, that God will 'once more reſtore them to their own land[104].'

Their eſtabliſhment in Judea, it may be added, will be of the more eaſy accompliſhment, becauſe the deteſtable government of the Turks has, in a degree almoſt incredible, depopulated Judea, Syria, and the fertile countries which are contiguous, and therefore there will be ample territories for them to inhabit and to cultivate. 'The total population of Syria', ſays Volney, 'may be 'eſtimated at 2,305,000 ſouls.' But 'let us ſuppoſe it 'two millions and a half, and ſince Syria contains about '5250 ſquare leagues, at the rate of 150 in length and 35 'in breadth, we ſhall have upon an average 476 inha-'bitants for every ſquare *league*. So feeble a population 'in ſo excellent a country may well excite our aſto-'niſhment, but this will be ſtill encreaſed, if we compare 'the preſent number of inhabitants, with that of ancient 'times.—From the accounts we have of Judea in the 'time of Titus, and which are to be eſteemed tolerably 'accurate, that country muſt have contained four mil-'lions of inhabitants.—If we go ſtill farther back into 'antiquity, we ſhall find the ſame populouſneſs among 'the Philiſtines, the Phœnicians, and in the kingdoms 'of Samaria and Damaſcus. It is true, that ſome writers, 'reaſoning from what they ſee in Europe, have called in 'queſtion theſe facts; ſeveral of which, indeed, ap-'peared to be diſputable; but the compariſons on which 'they build are not on that account the leſs erroneous; 'firſt, becauſe the lands of Aſia in general are more fer-

[104] On Man, vol. II. p. 373.

'tile

'tile than thoſe of Europe; ſecondly, becauſe a part of 'theſe lands are capable of being cultivated, and in fact 'are cultivated, without lying fallow or requiring ma-'nure; thirdly, becauſe the Orientals conſume one half 'leſs for their ſubſiſtence than the inhabitants of the 'Weſtern world, in general; for all which reaſons it 'appears, that a territory of leſs extent may contain 'double and treble the population. Theſe authors ex-'claim againſt the armies of two and three hundred thou-'ſand men, furniſhed by ſtates, which in Europe would 'not produce above twenty or thirty thouſand; but it is not 'conſidered, that the conſtitutions of ancient nations 'were wholly different from ours; that theſe nations 'were purely cultivators; that there was leſs inequality, 'and leſs idleneſs than among us; that every cultivator 'was a ſoldier; that in war the army frequently conſiſted 'of the whole nation.—Without appealing to the po-'ſitive teſtimony of hiſtory, there are innumerable mo-'numents, which depoſe in favour of the' great popula-tion of high antiquity. 'Such are the prodigious quan-'tity of ruins diſperſed over the plains, and even in the 'mountains, at this day deſerted. On the moſt remote 'parts of Carmel are found wild vines and olive-trees, 'which muſt have been conveyed thither by the hand of 'man; and, in the Lebanon of the Druzes and Maronites, 'the rocks, now abandoned to fir-trees and brambles, pre-'ſent us in a thouſand places with terraces, which prove 'they were anciently better cultivated, and conſequently 'much more populous than in our days[105].'

It is in the name of Almighty God, that Ezekiel ſays, *And I will multiply men upon you, all the houſe of Iſrael, even all of it: and the cities ſhall be inhabited, and the waſtes ſhall be builded: and I will—do better unto you*

[105] Volney's Travels through Syria and Egypt, vol. II. p. 365.

*than*

*than at your beginnings.—And the deſolate land ſhall be tilled, whereas it lay deſolate in the ſight of all that paſſed by. And they ſhall ſay, this land that was deſolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waſte and deſolate and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you ſhall know, that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was deſolate: I the Lord have ſpoken it, and I will do it*[106].

After having ſtated Dr. Hartley's *general* arguments, on the practicability of the reſtoration of the Jews to the country of their anceſtors, it may not be unallowable to enter into the field of conjecture, and conciſely to ſtate the more *immediate* cauſes, which may poſſibly contribute to their migration and their eſtabliſhment in Paleſtine. Should the Turkiſh empire be overturned by Ruſſia, and ſhould many of the Jews diſcover an inclination to ſettle in Paleſtine, which it is likely they would do on the event of ſo important a revolution; it is by no means impropable, that the policy of the Ruſſian government would embrace an opportunity of colonizing without expence a country, poſſeſſed of ſo many natural advantages, but which is, at preſent, ſo ſcantily inhabited, and ſo imperfectly cultivated. In ſuch a climate, and under ſuch circumſtances, the firſt ſettlers would be likely to proſper; and, having proſpered, it ſurely is not irrational to conjecture, that they would be followed by greater numbers, and at length by the general maſs of their countrymen, encouraged, as they would be, by the predictions of the Hebrew ſcriptures, and animated by the hope of attaining to national independence and

[106] Ch. xxxvi. 10, 11, 34, 35, 36. This chapter of Ezekiel contains, ſays Mr. Lowth, 'a prediction of the general reſtoration both of Iſrael 'and Judah.'

perſonal

perſonal ſecurity. Now ſhould the Ruſſian empire, already greatly ſuperior in point of magnitude to any permanent empire which has ever exiſted, in conſequence of her inſatiable ambition and the progreſs of her arms, become ſtill more extenſive; and ſhould the various climes under her dominion be afterwards governed by the raſh and fluctuating counſels of a feeble prince; it can hardly be a matter of doubt, that the unwieldy and ill-compacted fabric, requiring the moſt ſteady and diſcerning hand to direct its multifarious movements, and containing within itſelf the principles of diſcordancy and diſſolution, would, in a ſhort time, fall to pieces, and its diſunited fragments be ſo arranged as to form ſeparate governments. Amid theſe changes and convulſions, it is eaſy to conceive, that ſome of the provinces of Syria, which the Jews had recently colonized, might, with little difficulty, and without any violation of juſtice, be erected into an independent and reſpectable ſtate.

But however eaſy, as we may *conjecture*, may be the ſettlement of the Jews in Paleſtine, there are prophecies in the Old Teſtament, which lead us to expect, that they will not remain unmoleſted in the poſſeſſion of their country.

The following prophecy is extracted from the xxxviiith ch. of Ezekiel. *The word of Jehovah came alſo unto me, ſaying: Son of man, ſet thy face againſt Gog of the land of Magog, prince of Rhos, Meſhech, and Tubal, and propheſy againſt him, and ſay, thus ſaith the Lord Jehovah; behold I am againſt thee, O Gog.—Thou ſhalt go up, as a ſtorm cometh, thou ſhalt be as a cloud to cover the land; thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus ſaith the Lord Jehovah: it ſhall come to paſs at the ſame time, that things ſhall ariſe in thine heart, and thou ſhalt think an evil thought; and ſhalt ſay, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; and*

*I will*

*I will go to them that are at reſt, that dwell ſafely; all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates: to take a ſpoil, and to divide a prey; to turn mine hand againſt the deſolate places that are become inhabited, and againſt a people gathered out of the nations, poſſeſſing cattle and goods, dwelling in the middle of the earth.—In that day, when my people Iſrael dwelleth ſecurely, ſhalt thou not riſe up and come from thy place, from the north quarters, thou and many people with thee, all them riding upon horſes, a great company, and a mighty army? Shalt thou not come up againſt my people as a cloud to cover the land? Shall it not be in the latter days, that I will bring thee againſt my land; that the nations may know me, when I ſhall be ſanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes?—Art not thou he, of whom I ſpake in old time by my ſervants the prophets of Iſrael, who propheſied in thoſe days and years, that I would bring thee againſt them*[107]. And in the next chapter the prophet ſays: *And I will turn thee back, and leave but a ſixth part of thee, when I cauſe thee to come up from the north-quarters, and bring thee upon the mountains of Iſrael.—Thou ſhalt fall upon the mountains of Iſrael, thou and all thy bands, and the many people that are with thee.—And I will ſet my glory among the nations; and all the nations ſhall ſee my judgment which I have executed, and mine hand which I have laid upon them.—And the people of Iſrael ſhall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that I cauſed them to be carried away captives among the nations, and afterwards collected them into their own land. And none of them will I leave there any more, neither hide my face any more from them*[108].

[107] 'The expreſſions here uſed, *of old times*, and *which propheſied in thoſe days and years*, plainly imply, that there was to be a ſucceſſion of many ages between the publiſhing thoſe prophecies and this event foretold by them.' Mr. Lowth in loc.

[108] The paſſages above are copied from bp. Newcome's Improved Verſion of Ezekiel.

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In his argument to the xxxviiith and xxxixth chapters of Ezekiel, Mr. Lowth ſays, 'the prophecy, contained 'in this and the following chapter concerning Iſrael's 'victory over Gog and Magog, without queſtion relates 'to the latter ages of the world, when the whole houſe 'of Iſrael ſhall return into their own land.' And in commenting on the 8th v. of ch. xxxviii he ſays, 'the ſenſe 'is, that after the return of the people of Iſrael into their 'own country, and their having lived there for ſome time 'in peace and ſafety, this enemy will think to take advantage of their ſecurity, and fall upon them unexpectedly.'

'As for the name *Gog*, it ſignifies,' ſays Mede, 'the 'very ſame with *Magog*, for *mem* is but an Hemantic 'letter; and it pleaſed the ſpirit of God to take away 'this firſt ſyllable to diſtinguiſh between the people and 'the land of the people, calling the people *Gog* and the 'land the land of *Magog*[109].' That the Gog and Magog of the apocalypſe[110] cannot be underſtood of the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel, this ſagacious commentator has remarked[111]; and I regard his obſervation as indubitable.

Bochart, one of the moſt learned men whom France, or indeed Europe, ever produced, after obſerving, that among the ancients, it was the opinion of Joſephus, Euſtathius, Jerom, and Theodoret, that Magog was the father of the Scythians; and that this opinion is perfectly true; alleges various reaſons to prove, that Magog ſignifies Scythia. The beginning of the paſſage recently quoted from Ezekiel may, he ſays, be thus paraphraſed. Prepare yourſelf to prophecy againſt the king of the Scythians, of the land of Magog or Scythia, who is alſo the

[109] Mede's Works, p 374.
[110] Mentioned ch. xx, v. 8, 9.
[111] See his Works, p. 751.

prince

prince of Rhos, of Meſech, and of Tubal[112], that is, of the diſtricts of Araxene, Moſchica, and Tibarenia, countries contiguous to each other, and, at the time of the publication of the prophecy, ſubject to the Scythian power.

After obſerving that the territories of Tubal were ſituated to the South-Eaſt of the Euxine, Mr. Mede ſpeaks of the original ſeat of the poſterity of Magog, and ſays, Magog, 'with the conſent of all men, we place North 'of Tubal, and make him the father of thoſe Scythians, 'that dwelt on the Eaſt and North-Eaſt of the Euxine ſea.' For this we have alſo an 'argument from the report of 'Pliny, in that Scythopolis and Hierapolis, which theſe 'Scythians took when they overcame Syria, were ever 'after by the Syrians called Magog.' In courſe of time, his deſcendants, he obſerves, would have an opportunity of ſpreading over a vaſt extent of country, and of penetrating even to Nova Zembla[113].

'*Magog*,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'was the ſon of Japhet, 'Gen. x. 2. from whence the Scythians are generally 'ſuppoſed to be derived. The Mogul Tartars, a people 'of Scythian race, are ſtill called ſo by the Arabian wri-

[112] *Rhos* ſignifies, ſays Bochart, thoſe who inhabit the Araxene of the Greeks, a province watered by the Araxes and in the neighbourhood of the Caſpian. *Meſhech* and *Tubal*, according to the ſame writer, are the appellations of two adjoining nations, who in the times of Grecian antiquity were called the Moſchi and Tibareni, who had immediately to the North of them the people of Gog, and who themſelves inhabited a conſiderable part of the country between the Euxine and the Caſpian, and to the South of the Euxine. See the Phaleg of Bochart, l. iii. c. 12. See alſo a ſimilar ſtatement in the commentary of that learned Benedictine, Calmet. That Magog, Tubal, and Meſhech were the grandſons of Noah and the ſons of Japhet, we are told in the 2d verſe of the xth chapter of Geneſis. On the diſtricts of Aſia which they colonized and gave name to, Dr. Wells's *Hiſtorical Geography of the Old Teſtament* may alſo be conſulted, vol. I. p. 154—159.

[113] Mede's Works, p. 374, 378.

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'ters.' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks bp. Newcome. In 'Gen. x. 2.' ſays he, 'we learn, that Magog was the ſe-'cond ſon of Japhet. Ezekiel uſes Magog for the coun-'try of which Gog was prince.' Michaelis (Spic. Geogr. p. 34) 'thinks, that Magog denotes thoſe vaſt tracts of 'country to the north of India and China, which the 'Greeks called Scythia, and we Tartary.—The Arabs 'call the Chineſe wall *Sud Yagog et Magog*[114], that is '*Agger Gog et Magog*[115].'

Notwithſtanding the Scythians and the Tartars are admitted to be the ancient and modern names of the ſame people, and notwithſtanding the paſſages which have been quoted from different writers appear to lead to a very plain concluſion; yet I have not met with a ſingle commentator, who ſtates it to be his opinion, that it is probable, this memorable prophecy of Ezekiel principally relates to the Tartars. 'By Gog and Magog,' ſays Mr. Lowth, 'may moſt probably here be meant the Turks;' and both Mede[116] and biſhop Newton[117] ſpeak of their being ſignified in theſe chapters of Ezekiel, as of a point that is well eſtabliſhed. The principal reaſon which is given is, that the Turks, though they have now inhabited a different part of the world for centuries, are *deſcended* from the Tartars: but to me, I confeſs, this appears far from being ſatisfactory. The Ruſſians and the Moſcovites having been ſuppoſed by ſome to have been colonies ſent out from the people of Roſh and Meſech or Moſoch; Mr. Bicheno ſuppoſes[118], that the army which will attack the newly peopled country of the Jews will conſiſt principally of Ruſſians. But Mr. Bicheno attempts not to ſhew, that there is, or that there ever has been thought to be, any conceivable reaſon for explain-

[114] Hyde's Works by Sharpe. II. 426. [115] Newcome on Ezek. xxxviii 2.
[116] P. 374, 751, 1000. [117] Vol. II. p. 187; vol. III. p. 329.
[118] *Signs of the times*, Part II. p. 45.

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ing Gog and Magog of the Ruſſians; and it is to be remembered, that, whoever Gog and Magog may be ſuppoſed to be, they conſtitute the main part of the invading army, and that the others are leſſer powers and auxiliaries, who are to march under the banners of Gog.

I ſhall now briefly allege ſome reaſons in ſupport of my *conjecture*, that this formidable army will principally conſiſt of Tartars. That the name of *Gog* and *Magog* perfectly agrees with that idea has already been ſeen.

*Thou ſhalt come*, ſays Ezekiel, *from thy place out of the North Parts*[119], *thou and many people with thee*. This account, it is plain, correſponds not ſo well to the ſituation of the Turks, who are principally ſettled in the warm regions of the South, as to that of the Tartars, who inhabit regions, which are in general cold and are extended to very Northern latitudes. That the invading hoſt will come from a diſtance, the words of Ezekiel, it may be added, ſeem to imply: but the Turks, at preſent at leaſt, are ſituated in Judea and the contiguous countries. *Thou ſhalt ſay*, declares the prophet, *I will go up to the land of unwalled villages,—to take a ſpoil, and to take a prey*. And again, *Art thou come to take a ſpoil? Haſt thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away ſilver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great ſpoil*[120]. Theſe particulars appear not to be deſcriptive of the regularly conducted wars of the Ruſſians or the Turks, which are ordinarily wars of aggrandiſement or defence; and there certainly ſeems reaſonable ground for expectation, that they would have been ſpoken of in a very different manner, had they been the Turks come to recover the territories they had loſt. But the prophetic ſtatement completely harmonizes with

[119] XXXVIII. 15. This circumſtance is repeated again xxxix. 2.
[120] XXXVIII. 11, 12, 13.

the general character of Tartar warfare, with the depredatory ſpirit, and the tranſitory inroads, of the ſhepherds of the North. The prophet repreſents them to be extremely numerous, as being *like a cloud* which ſhall *cover the land*; and it is well known, that there is no nation, which has been accuſtomed to bring ſuch numerous forces into the field as the princes of Tartary. They are alſo ſpoken of as ALL *of them riding upon horſes, a great company, and a mighty army.* To the Tartars, and to the Tartars only, this deſcription exactly correſponds; for there is no other nation in the world, who conſtantly make uſe of cavalry alone[121].' Ezekiel likewiſe ſays[122], *I will ſmite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cauſe thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand*[123]; and it is obſervable, that the Tartars in every age have encountered their enemies with bows and arrows, and that theſe are the weapons which they ſtill employ, in this reſpect differing both from the Ruſſians and the Turks.

As the ſubject is in itſelf inſtructive and curious, I may be indulged in quoting from Mr. Gibbon ſome extracts reſpecting the manners of this nation of ſhepherds. At preſent the Tartar tribes are deterred from planning

[121] 'Conſtant practice,' ſays Gibbon, had ſeated the Scythians 'ſo 'firmly on horſeback, that they were ſuppoſed by ſtrangers to perform 'the ordinary duties of civil life, to eat, to drink, and even to ſleep, 'without diſmounting from their ſteeds.' vol. IV. p. 348.

[122] XXXIX. 3.

[123] See the Obſervations annexed to *the Genealogical Hiſtory of the Tartars by Abulghazi Khan*, 1730, vol. II. p. 400. 'Moſt of the Tartars,' ſays the author of the obſervations, 'hang their bow at the left ſide, in a ſort 'of caſe, when they take horſe; but they carry their quiver upon their 'backs.' And Mr. Gibbon, ſpeaking of them, ſays (vol. IV. p. 350), 'the 'long Tartar bow is drawn with a nervous arm; and the weighty arrow 'is directed to its object with unerring aim, and irreſiſtible ſtrength.'

any

any ſchemes of invaſion, and awed into tranquillity, by the armies and the fame of the Ottoman Porte, and ſtill more by the mighty ſtrength and vigorous adminiſtration of the Ruſſian monarchy. But ſhould theſe empires fall to pieces, the ſubſequent extracts diſplay the extreme probability, that the Tartars, laying hold of this favourable opportunity for the renewal of foreign hoſtilities, will make a new and formidable irruption into ſome of the fertile provinces of Turkey[124].

'In every age, the immenſe plains of Scythia, or Tar-
'tary, have been inhabited by vagrant tribes of hunters
'and ſhepherds, whoſe indolence refuſes to cultivate the
'earth, and whoſe reſtleſs ſpirit diſdains the confinement
'of a ſedentary life. In every age the Scythians, and
'Tartars, have been renowned for their invincible cou-
'rage, and rapid conqueſts. The thrones of Aſia have
'been repeatedly overturned by the ſhepherds of the
'North; and their arms have ſpread terror and devaſta-
'tion over the moſt fertile and warlike countries of Eu-
'rope.' Many circumſtances, indeed, concur to inſpire the Tartars with a military ſpirit, and to encourage their invaſion of countries that are feebly defended. This will appear, if an attention be paid to their diet, their habitations, and their exerciſes.

'In the military profeſſion, and eſpecially in the con-
'duct of a numerous army, the excluſive uſe of animal
'food appears to be productive of the moſt ſolid advan-
'tages. Corn is a bulky and periſhable commodity; and
'the large magazines, which are indiſpenſably neceſſary
'for the ſubſiſtence of our troops, muſt be ſlowly tran-
'ſported by the labour of men or horſes. But the flocks
'and herds, which accompany the march of the Tartars,

[124] On the formidable irruptions of the Tartars in the 5th, the 13th, and the 14th centuries ſee the note in p. 476—480.

'afford a ſure and encreaſing ſupply of fleſh and milk: 'in the far greater part of the uncultivated waſte the ve- 'getation of the graſs is quick and luxuriant; and there 'are few places ſo extremely barren, that the hardy 'cattle of the North cannot find ſome tolerable paſture. 'The ſupply is multiplied and prolonged, by the undiſ- 'tinguiſhing appetite, and patient abſtinence, of the 'Tartars. They indifferently feed on the fleſh of thoſe 'animals, that have been killed for the table, or have 'died of diſeaſe.—The active cavalry of Scythia is always 'followed, in their moſt diſtant and rapid incurſions, by 'an adequate number of ſpare horſes, who may be occa- 'ſionally uſed, either to redouble the ſpeed, or to ſatisfy 'the hunger, of the Barbarians. Many are the reſources 'of hunger and poverty. When the forage round a 'camp of Tartars is almoſt conſumed, they ſlaughter the 'greateſt part of their cattle, and preſerve the fleſh, either 'ſmoked, or dried in the ſun. On the ſudden emergency 'of a haſty march, they provide themſelves with a ſuffi- 'cient quantity of little balls of cheeſe, or rather of hard 'curd, which they occaſionally diſſolve in water; and 'this unſubſtantial diet will ſupport, for many days, 'the life, and even the ſpirits, of the patient warrior.'

'The progreſs of manufactures and commerce inſen- 'ſibly collects a large multitude within the walls of a 'city; but theſe citizens are no longer ſoldiers; and the 'arts, which adorn and improve the ſtate of civil ſociety, 'corrupt the habits of the military life. The paſtoral 'manners of the Scythians ſeem to unite the different ad- 'vantages of ſimplicity and refinement. The individuals 'of the ſame tribe are conſtantly aſſembled, but they 'are aſſembled in a camp; and the native ſpirit of theſe 'dauntleſs ſhepherds is animated by mutual ſupport and 'emulation. The houſes of the Tartars are no more than 'ſmall tents.—The palaces of the rich conſiſt of wooden 'huts,

'huts, of ſuch a ſize that they may be conveniently fixed 'on large waggons.—The flocks and herds, after grazing 'all day in the adjacent paſtures, retire, on the approach 'of night, within the protection of the camp. The ne-'ceſſity of preventing the moſt miſchievous confuſion, in 'ſuch a perpetual concourſe of men and animals, muſt 'gradually introduce, in the diſtribution, the order, and 'the guard, of the encampment, the rudiments of the mi-'litary art. As ſoon as the forage of a certain diſtrict is 'conſumed, the tribe, or rather army, of ſhepherds, makes 'a regular march to ſome freſh paſtures; and thus ac-'quires in the ordinary occupations of the paſtoral life, 'the practical knowledge of one of the moſt important 'and difficult operations of war. The choice of ſtations 'is regulated by the difference of the ſeaſons: in the ſum-'mer, the Tartars advance towards the North:—In the 'winter they return to the South.—Theſe manners are 'admirably adapted to diffuſe, among the wandering 'tribes, the ſpirit of emigration and conqueſt. The con-'nexion between the people and their territory is of ſo 'frail a texture, that it may be broken by the ſlighteſt ac-'cident. The camp, and not the ſoil, is the native 'country of the genuine Tartar. Within the precincts 'of that camp, his family, his companions, his property 'are always included; and, in the moſt diſtant marches, 'he is ſtill ſurrounded by the objects which are dear, or 'valuable, or familiar in his eyes. The thirſt of rapine, 'the fear or the reſentment, of injury, the impatience of 'ſervitude, have, in every age, been ſufficient cauſes to 'urge the tribes of Scythia boldly to advance into ſome 'unknown countries, where they might hope to find 'a more plentiful ſubſiſtence, or a leſs formidable 'enemy.'

The Tartars are poſſeſſed of much leiſure, and this lei-ſure is 'ſpent in the violent and ſanguinary exerciſe of

'the chace. The plains of Tartary are filled with a 'ſtrong and ſerviceable breed of horſes, which are eaſily 'trained for the purpoſes of war and hunting. The Scy-'thians of every age have been celebrated as bold and 'ſkilful riders.—The exploits of the hunters of Scythia 'are not confined to the deſtruction of timid or innoxious 'beaſts;' and there is one of their modes of hunting, which opens the faireſt field to the exertions of valour, and 'may juſtly be conſidered as the image, and as 'the ſchool, of war. The general hunting matches, the 'pride and delight of the Tartar princes, compoſe an in-'ſtructive exerciſe for their numerous cavalry. A circle 'is drawn, of many miles in circumference, to encom-'paſs the game of an extenſive diſtrict; and the troops 'that form the circle regularly advance towards a com-'mon centre; where the captive animals, ſurrounded 'on every ſide, are abandoned to the darts of the hun-'ters. In this march, which frequently continues many 'days, the cavalry are obliged to climb the hills, or ſwim 'rivers, and to wind through the vallies, without inter-'rupting the preſcribed order of their gradual progreſs. 'They acquire the habit of directing their eye, and their 'ſteps, to a remote object; of preſerving their intervals; 'of ſuſpending, or accelerating, their pace, according to 'the motions of the troops on their right and left; and 'of watching and repeating the ſignals of their leaders. 'Their leaders ſtudy, in this practical ſchool, the moſt 'important leſſon of the military art; the prompt and ac-'curate judgment of ground, of diſtance, and of time. 'To employ againſt a human enemy the ſame patience 'and valour, the ſame ſkill and diſcipline, is the only al-'teration, which is required in real war; and the amuſe-'ments of the chace ſerve as a prelude to the conqueſt of 'an empire.'

As

As late as the year 1771, was a great tranſmigration of Calmucks. Three hundred thouſand of them, after having remained about a century under the protection of Ruſſia, near the banks of the Volga, and in the neighbourhood of Aſtrachan, traverſed an immenſe extent of country, and 'returned to their native ſeats on the fron-'tiers of the Chineſe empire[125].'

Along with the numerous forces of Gog, there will, the prophet informs us, be the bands of Gomer[126] and Togarmah[127], together with troops from Perſia, Æthiopia, and Lybia[128]; and it is very credible, that the fame of this great invaſion, the ſucceſſes which will be gained in the courſe of an extenſive march, and the expectation of a participation in the ſpoil, will allure bodies of troops from different countries to enliſt under the banners of this mighty hoſt of military plunderers[129].

The prophecy teaches us to expect, that the Jews will not be preſerved from the efforts of their invaders, merely by their own valour, or by that of any allies whoſe aſſiſtance they may be able to obtain; for it ſeems plainly intimated, that the army of the enemy will be diſſolved, partly by the ſpread of ſome contagious diſeaſe, and partly by the progreſs of internal diſcord, and the proſecution of ſanguinary quarrels among the hoſtile ſqua-

[125] Gibbon. vol. IV. p. 342, 344, 346, 349, 350, 370.

[126] 'Cimmerians: a very old and celebrated people, who inhabited 'the peninſula of Crim Tartary.' Michaelis in loc. as quoted by bp. Newcome.

[127] According to Bochart, *Togarmah* is Cappadocia.

[128] XXXVIII. 5, 6.

[129] In the 13th century, the fame of the arms of the Moguls excited a number of perſons to go as far as China from the remote countries of the Weſt, and to enliſt themſelves into the ſervice of the Tartars. In their attack of the cities in the Northern empire of China, 'the ſieges,' ſays Mr. Gibbon (vol. XI. p. 415), 'were conducted by the Mahometans and 'Franks.'

drons. *Every man's ſword*, ſays the prophet, *ſhall be againſt his brother. And I will plead againſt him with peſtilence and with blood*[130].

Of the invading multitude deſcribed by Ezekiel, the far greater part, the prophet aſſures us, ſhall be deſtroyed[131]; and ſuppoſing them to be Tartars, and to diſplay the ſame eagerneſs to violate all the principles of juſtice and humanity, as their countrymen have been *accuſtomed* to diſcover, they will probably be thought to deſerve their fate. 'In all their invaſions of the civilized 'empires of the South, the Scythian ſhepherds,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'have been uniformly actuated by a ſavage and 'deſtructive ſpirit.—After the Moguls had ſubdued the 'northern provinces of China, it was ſeriouſly propoſed, 'not in the hour of victory and paſſion, but in calm deli-'berate council, to exterminate all the inhabitants of that 'populous country, that the vacant land might be con-'verted to the paſture of cattle.—The moſt caſual pro-'vocation, the ſlighteſt motive of caprice or convenience, 'often provoked them to involve a whole people in an 'indiſcriminate maſſacre: and the ruin of ſome flouriſh-'ing cities was executed with ſuch unrelenting perſeve-'rance, that, according to their own expreſſion, horſes 'might run, without ſtumbling, over the ground where 'they had once ſtood. The great capitals of Khoraſan, 'Maru, Neiſabour, and Herat, were deſtroyed by the 'armies of Zingis; and the exact account, which was 'taken of the ſlain, amounted to 4,347,000 perſons.—In 'his camp before Delhi, Timur maſſacred 100,000 In-'dian priſoners, who had ſmiled when the army of their

[130] XXXVIII. 21, 22. 'It is plain,' ſays bp Newcome, that the circumſtances, mentioned in theſe verſes, 'remain to be accompliſhed on 'the future enemies of the Jews, when his people are reinſtated in God's 'favour.'

[131] XXXIX. 2, 11.

'countrymen

'countrymen appeared in ſight. The people of Iſpahan 'ſupplied 70,000 human ſculls for the ſtructure of ſeveral 'lofty towers;' and 'he erected on the ruins of Bagdad 'a pyramid of 90,000 heads[132].'

The ſame cauſes and the ſame events, it may be added, which will prediſpoſe the Jews to inveſtigate the proofs of the divine miſſion of Jeſus, and which will ſtrike conviction into their minds, will operate with ſimilar force upon the diſciples of infidelity.

I conclude the chapter with a ſhort but ſolemn declaration, relative to the future happy ſtate of the Jews, contained in the lxiid ch. of Iſaiah. Speaking of Jeruſalem, the prophet ſays, *Thou ſhalt no more be termed Forſaken, neither ſhall thy land any more be termed Deſolate. The Lord hath ſworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his ſtrength. Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the ſons of the ſtrangers ſhall not drink thy wine, for the which thou haſt laboured: but they that have gathered it ſhall eat it, and praiſe the Lord; and they that have brought it together ſhall drink it*[133].

[132] Vol. VI. p. 53—56; Vol. XII. p. 24.
[133] V. 4, 8, 9.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### ON THE PREDICTIONS RELATIVE TO THE PERIOD, DENOMINATED THE MILLENNIUM.

IN the preceding chapters it has been ſhewn, that the deſtruction of eccleſiaſtical uſurpation, of the antichriſtian monarchies in Europe, and of Oriental deſpotiſm,

potiſm, is pointed out in the prophetic ſcriptures; and, according to the natural order of things, the accompliſhment of theſe great events may juſtly be thought to have prepared the way for a period of terreſtrial felicity, ſignally elevated and laſting. The proſpect of ſuch a period muſt be ſoothing to the mind of man, when it returns, fatigued and diſpirited, from contemplating the miſeries of human-kind, which preſs ſo thick upon each other in the page of hiſtory. How unceaſingly have their rights been uſurped, and an ample portion of their property plundered, to promote the intereſts of a tyrannic prieſthood, or in compliance with the orders of the noble, the ſtateſman, or the monarch! How uniformly, in every paſt period, has their blood been ſhed, their virtues debaſed, their underſtandings darkened, in order to gratify the vices, or to ſecure the power, of the privileged orders! 'He, who the 'moſt diſpaſſionately contemplates ſo ſad a ſcene,' to uſe the words of biſhop Hurd, 'can hardly reconcile appear-'ances to what muſt have been his natural expectations. 'Here, then, the prophecies of this work, I mean, of the 'apocalypſe, comes in to our relief,' They ſhew, 'that 'the end of this diſpenſation (the Chriſtian) is to promote 'virtue and happineſs; and that this end ſhall finally, 'but through many and long obſtructions, be accom-'pliſhed.' Thus 'they reconcile us to that diſordered 'ſcene which hath hitherto been preſented to us; and 'give repoſe to the anxious mind, in the aſſured hope of 'better things to come[1].'

Before I ſelect from thoſe paſſages of ſcripture, which point out the certain arrival of a permanent period of happineſs on earth, it will be proper to explain what my ideas of a millennium are. For I am aware, that, againſt the more common repreſentations of it, ſtrong prejudices

[1] Vol. II. p. 206.

have

have with juſtice been entertained. By the diſorderly imagination of ſome viſionaries it has been painted as a ſtate of things, altogether wild and irrational; and even many, of a ſober turn, and a cultivated judgment, have annexed to it much of the marvellous and improbable. By the MILLENNIUM I mean a period of great length, eminently diſtinguiſhed for the ſpread of KNOWLEDGE and of genuine CHRISTIANITY, in conſequence of which good GOVERNMENT will univerſally be eſtabliſhed, VIRTUE will not only be generally eſteemed but practiſed, and human HAPPINESS will be carried to an unexampled height.

The literal conſtruction of texts is, I apprehend, the grand ſource of error on this ſubject. Strange is the length to which this mode of explanation has been carried by very ſenſible writers; who, upon this topic, appear to have altogether forgotten, that the prophetic ſcriptures are conſpicuouſly characterized by highly figurative language. The ſame men, who uniformly acknowledge all the former part of the apocalypſe to be written in the ſymbolic ſtyle, when they come to the three laſt chapters, appear all at once to change their method of explication, and in a great degree interpret it according to the letter. Many of the ancient fathers, from carrying this to its full extent, brought diſcredit, not only on themſelves, but on the book of Revelation itſelf. The too literal expounding of paſſages has, ſays Dr. Jortin, 'produced ſtrange and precarious notions amongſt ancient and modern Chriſtians concerning the millennium: thus it has been ſuppoſed, that Chriſt ſhall come and reign perſonally upon earth a thouſand years, that the old Chriſtian martyrs ſhall riſe again to reign with him, that the Jews ſhall have a temple rebuilt, and a temple-ſervice renewed[2].'

[2] Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. Vol. II. p. 424.

As a proof, however, that rational ideas on the nature of the millennium have long been entertained, I tranſcribe a ſhort extract from Mr. Stephens, as printed nearly 140 years ſince. 'For the nature of this kingdom, 'we deſire that we may not be miſtaken. We do not 'plead for a perſonal reign, nor a literal reſurrection of 'the martyrs, nor a confluence of all ſenſual delights, 'as many have done. That which we principally ſtand 'for, is, the univerſal ſubjection of the nations to the 'laws of the Goſpel, and the reſt of the church from 'ſuch perſecutions as have been in all antichriſtian 'times[3].'

As a day uſually ſtands for a year in the apocalypſe, and three years and a half for 1260; I think it an opinion not entirely deſtitute of plauſibility, that the Thouſand Years, ſpoken of by St. John, are prophetic years, and denote a period of 360,000 common years. This was thought probable by Hartley[4], and is the opinion of Prieſtley[5]. It is not, I am aware, unencumbered with difficulties; and is expoſed to a very formidable objection, drawn from a conſideration of the ſize of the globe and the probable progreſs of population. That mankind will ſubſiſt in this world only ten centuries, after the commencement of the millenniary period, I do, however, conceive to be a notion as irrational and unfounded, as it is gloomy and diſpiriting.

To the reality of a millennium a crowd of paſſages bear teſtimony. Of theſe a few ſhall be alleged.

Daniel, having declared in the 35th v. of the iid. ch. that all the oppreſſive governments of the world ſhall be *broken to pieces*, ſays, in the cloſe of the ſame verſe, that *the ſtone*, which *was cut out without hands, became a great*

[3] A Calcul. of the Numb. &c. p. 91. [4] On Man, Vol. II. p. 400.
[5] See his *Inſtitutes*, Vol. II. p. 417.

*mountain*,

*mountain, and filled the whole earth,* 'that is,' ſays Dr. Lancaſter, 'the kingdom of the Meſſiah, having de-'ſtroyed the four monarchies, became an univerſal mo-'narchy[5].' What a lofty idea do theſe ſymbols ſuggeſt to us of the final ſpread of Chriſtianity[7]! That, which at firſt was ſo narrow in its extent, as juſtly to be likened to a ſmall ſtone, will at length be worthy of being compared to a mighty mountain. This prophetic viſion, ſays Mr. Mede, 'points out two ſtates of the kingdom 'of Chriſt. The firſt to be while thoſe times of the '*kingdoms* of the *Gentiles* yet laſted, typified by a *ſtone* '*hewen out of a mountain without hands*, the monar-'chical ſtatue yet ſtanding upon his feet. The Second 'not to be until the utter deſtruction and diſſipation of 'the image, when *the ſtone* having *ſmote it upon the feet*, 'ſhould grow into *a great mountain*, which ſhould *fill* '*the whole earth*. The Firſt may be called, for diſ-'tinction ſake, *regnum lapidis*, the kingdom of the ſtone; 'which is the ſtate of Chriſt's kingdom which hath hi-'therto been: the other, *regnum montis*, the kingdom 'of the mountain (that is, of the ſtone grown into a 'mountain, &c.), which is the ſtate of his kingdom 'which hereafter ſhall be[8].' But the ſubject, which Mr. Mede was handling, he felt to be a very delicate one, and but ill calculated to gratify the ruling powers.

[6] With the dictates of reaſon this perfectly agrees. 'As the goſpel 'was plainly *fitted* for the uſe of all mankind, ſo nothing can ſeem more 'reaſonable and fit, than that ſometime or other it ſhould be made known 'to all.' *Chriſtianity the Perfect. of all Rel.* by Tho. Jeffery, p. 98.

[7] However the doctrine of the millennium may be underſtood, 'it is 'clear,' ſays Mr. Gray, 'that the prophetic declarations promiſe the uni-'verſal eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, in purity and truth, to be preceded 'by the fall of that antichriſtian power, of which the character is deſcribed 'as ſo repugnant and hoſtile to the ſpirit of the church.' Gray's Diſ-courſes, 1793, p. 316.

[8] P. 909.

In

In a letter to Mr. Hayne, who differed with him on the prophecy of Daniel, he accordingly says, 'I am unwilling to put all in *writing*, which I would utter in a '*private* and *personal* discourse[9].'

To the Jews, says bp. Chandler, we might on these points appeal. 'Ask them, what is meant by *the stone*, 'and they answer as one man, *the Messias*. Go to the 'image, that the stone smote on the toes, and they are 'as unanimous in saying, it is the Roman empire, which 'must be, therefore, still in being, according to their 'sentiments[10].'

The bishop, to authenticate this statement, cites as witnesses, a crowd of the most celebrated rabbins. To these conclusions the words of Daniel do, indeed, irresistibly lead. In his explication of this vision to Nebuchadnezzar, he says, in v. 44 & 45, that the symbolic *stone broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold*; and that the *kingdom*, which *the God of heaven set up, shall never be destroyed*. The restricted sense of the word *never* will be more conveniently noted in a future page.

After observing, that 'the present kingdoms of Europe 'are unquestionably represented by the feet and toes of 'the great image,' Dr. Priestley says, 'From Daniel's 'interpretation of this vision it may be clearly inferred, 'that the forms of government, ecclesiastical and civil, 'which now subsist in Europe, must be dissolved; but 'that something very different from them, and greatly 'superior to them, more favourable to the virtue and 'happiness of mankind, will take place in their stead. 'That this is the meaning of the prophecy can hardly be 'doubted by any person, who shall give the *least* attention to it[11].'

[9] P. 915. [10] Def. of Christianity, p. 100.
[11] Institutes, &c. Vol. II. p. 426.

But

But another prophetic viſion of the ſame import, and yet more clear, is recorded in ch. vii. After predicting, in v. 11 and 12, the deſtruction of the papal power and the oppreſſive monarchies of the world, Daniel immediately adds in v. 13 and 14, *I ſaw in the night-viſions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven;—and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,* THAT ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS, AND LANGUAGES, SHOULD SERVE HIM. 'The 'time, in which this kingdom is given,' ſays Dr. Sykes, 'is expreſsly mentioned to be after the death of the beaſt, 'or after the expiration of the fourth kingdom.—And 'here it is obſervable, that the kingdom of *the Son of man* 'is not ſpoken of as a kingdom, in this prophecy, till 'the *judgment was ſet*, i. e. not till that glorious ſtate of 'it, when *the ſtone* ſhould actually become *a mountain*[12].'

There has before been occaſion to introduce extracts from Daubuz and from bp. Newton, wherein they remark, that it is the cuſtom of the prophets firſt to deſcribe an event in the language of ſymbols, and afterwards to repreſent it in plain and ordinary words. Thus, in the paſſage juſt cited, the *firſt* clauſe is cloathed in the emblematic language of the Eaſt; but the *ſecond* is expreſſed literally, and is explanatory of the meaning of the former. Dr. More accordingly obſerves in his prophetic alphabet, that '*riding upon the clouds* ſignifies— 'ſucceſs againſt our enemies and enlargement of power.' In confirmation of this, I give the words of Achmet, as appealed to by Dr. More, and quoted by Dr. Lancaſter: this ancient writer ſays, that, according to the uſage of the Perſians and Egyptians, 'a king's riding upon the 'clouds is interpreted of foreign nations ſerving him, of

[12] Upon the Truth of Chr. p. 18. What Mede obſerves, p. 933, is in exact agreement with this quotation from Dr. Sykes.

'his

'his ruling over them, and of his being exceedingly 'proſperous and ſucceſsful[13].' Indeed bp. Newton ſays, 'on Mat. xxiv, 30, that 'in the ancient *prophets* God 'is frequently deſcribed as *coming in the clouds*, upon 'any remarkable interpoſition and manifeſtation of his 'power; and the ſame deſcription is here applied to 'Chriſt[14].' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks Vitringa. 'Chriſt 'is ſaid *to come in the clouds of heaven* in the ſtyle of 'ſcripture, as often as he demonſtrates his glory and 'majeſty by the ſignal effects of his favour, ſeverity, 'and power[15].'

That a *cloud* is a ſymbol, denoting ſucceſs, was before remarked[16]. When therefore it is ſaid in Daniel, that *one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven*, the prediction appears evidently to carry with it this import, that, at the period ſpoken of, the religion of Jeſus will obtain a ſignal triumph over all its enemies, and will have a glorious prevalence. Agreeably to this, Daubuz and Lancaſter conceive, that when Chriſt ſaid in Mat. xxiv. 30, *they ſhall ſee the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory*; he ſuperadded theſe words, *power and great glory*, as explanatory of the ſymbol which Daniel had employed; and it is after he had been diſcuſſing at length the eſtabliſhed meaning of *heaven* in prophetic language, that the

[13] Achmetis Oneirocritica, 164.

[14] Vol. II. p. 283. In Iſaiah, xix. 1. it is ſaid, *behold, the Lord rideth upon a ſwift cloud, and ſhall come into Egypt.*

[15] In Apoc. I. 7. See this obſervation alſo made and illuſtrated by Brenius (*De Regno Eccl. Glor.* cap. 5). I likewiſe add the ſtatement of bp. Newcome. 'I think,' ſays this worthy prelate and able ſcriptural critic, 'any ſignal interpoſition in behalf of his church, or in the deſtruction 'of his enemies, may be metaphorically called *a coming*, or *a parouſia*, 'of Chriſt.' *Obſervations on our Lord's Conduct as a Divine Inſtructor*, p. 256.

[16] See authorities for this in p. 136.

former

former of these writers says, in this prediction of our Saviour, it is plain, that *heaven* is synonimous to *powers* and *glory*[17]. And I must not omit to observe, that Dr. Lightfoot, who was so intimately conversant in the Jewish phraseology, thinks, that this and similar passages are indubitably not to be interpreted of Christ's actual advent. By writers of reputation the belief of his personal reign on earth is, indeed, very generally rejected[18]. This, however, I believe, to adopt the words of Mr. Pyle, that he shall reign in the hearts, and holy lives, and examples of his followers[19].

Among others who have regarded the expression in Mat. xxiv. 30, *they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven*, as undoubtedly figurative, (I repeat

[17] P. 161. See this observed by Waple on Rev. ch. i. v. 7. '*Clouds* '*of heaven*, in the scripture-phrase, seem,' says Dr. More in his prophetic alphabet, 'to signify power and great glory.' See also Taylor's *Thoughts on the Grand Apostacy*, p. 179, where he observes, that '*the coming of Christ* 'in the kingdom of God does by no means intimate any kind of local 'motion or change of place: but merely the arrival at power and glory.— 'Thus we say in English, that the king *came* to his throne, that a man '*came* to his estate, &c. without the least idea of local motion.'

[18] Among others, it is rejected in express terms by Crellius (in Rom. xi. 23), Vitringa (in Apoc. p. 848), Brenius (de Regno Christi), Dr. John Edwards (Hist. of the Various Dispensations of Religion, vol. II. p. 654), Peganius (on the Apoc. p. 238), Dr. Thomas Burnet (Theory of the Earth, vol. II. p. 308), Whitby (on the Milennium, ch. iv.), Hurd (vol. I. 123), and Jortin (on Eccl. Hist. vol. II. p. 424). Mede, speaking of this subject, says, 'I dare not so much as *imagine*, that it should be a visible 'converse upon earth (p. 741);' and how strongly Dr. More condemned the contrary opinion, the following citation from him will evince. 'The 'personal reign of Christ upon earth and of his holy martyrs is a very rash 'and groundless and unsafe conceit.' Myst. of Godliness, p. 181. The passage that follows is from Dr. Burnet. 'That Christ should leave that 'right-hand of his Father, to come and pass a thousand years here below, 'living upon earth in an heavenly body: this, I confess, is a thing I never 'could digest.'

[19] On the Rev. p. 87.

the names which have before been incidentally mentioned,) are Daubuz, Lancaſter, Lightfoot, Vitringa, Le Clerc, Brenius, Whitby, Hammond, Benſon, Macknight, Campbell, and Niſbett, together with biſhops Newton, Newcome, and Pearce. The *firſt* coming of Chriſt, ſays bp. Hurd, 'was then over, when he expired on the 'croſs.' But his *ſecond*, obſerves the prelate, is of a different kind and not to be underſtood of a perſonal appearance[20]. Indeed 'the word *Chriſt*,' ſays the ſame writer in another place, 'is frequently uſed in the apoſtolic 'writings for the doctrine of Chriſt; in which ſenſe we 'are ſaid to *put on Chriſt*, to *grow in Chriſt*, to *learn* 'Chriſt, and in other inſtances[21].'

Is it not ſurpriſing, that the very ſame perſons, who declare, that the expreſſion, *the coming of the Son of man in the clouds*, when it occurs in Daniel and the Evangeliſts, though acknowledged to be prophetic, is to be *literally* underſtood; when they meet with exactly ſimilar language in St. John, univerſally admit that it *there* carries with it a *figurative* import? When Chriſt is repreſented as ſitting upon *a white cloud* (xiv. 14), or deſcribed as ſitting upon *a white horſe*[22] (vi. 2), the ſymbolic texture

[20] Vol. I. p. 123. [21] Vol. II. p. 11.

[22] This prophecy, ſays Daubuz, denotes the rapid progreſs of the Goſpel. Anciently *a horſe* was not uſed for the convenience of riding, nor ſubjected to the drudgeries of agriculture. He was employed in war alone. Hence he became a ſymbol of conqueſt. To evince this, Dr. Lancaſter refers to the prophecies of ſcripture and the oneirocritics of the Eaſt. *White*, he obſerves, is the ſymbol of proſperity; 'and therefore *white* horſes were 'uſed by conquerors in their days of triumph. And it was, and ſtill is, 'the cuſtom of the Eaſtern nations to ride on white horſes at the marriage-'cavalcade. White horſes were alſo looked upon by the ancients as the 'ſwifteſt.—Therefore *a white horſe*, in proportion to the capacity and qua-'lity of his rider, is the ſymbol of a very ſpeedy and great advancement, 'and the certain prognoſtic of great joy and triumph.' On this ſubject Daubuz has furniſhed us with a profuſion of evidence (in p. 258—261, and 878).

of

of the paſſages they preſume not to deny. But is not this to incur the charge of inconſiſtency? To undermine ſuch an interpretation, is it not ſufficient to ſtate the palpable variations, to which its advocates are reduced? The interpretation of theſe ſymbols St. John has himſelf alſo ſupplied (as Daniel and our Lord have done in the quotations above); for it is added reſpecting Chriſt in the verſe laſt cited, *and he went forth conquering and to conquer.*

But although there is not ſufficient reaſon for believing, that Chriſt will deſcend upon earth *at the commencement of the millennium*, and a ſecond time become its inhabitant, yet does the New Teſtament contain paſſages which deciſively prove, that at *the day of judgment* he will perſonally appear[23].

What is the conſequence of making it a rule to interpret prophecy *literally?* So completely does this method of explication, when applied to *many* of the predictions of Scripture, alter their genuine import, and ſuch an air of wildneſs and improbability does it impart to them, that it is likely materially to promote the cauſe of infidelity. Inſtances of this it would be eaſy to accumulate. Were there not acceſs to another mode of interpretation, the figurative and ſymbolic, the ſteadieſt and moſt confirmed faith would be ſtartled, and ſtand in ſuſpenſe. What kind of plea has been advanced for perpetually recurring to the literal method of explaining prophecy, the following extract from an author of this claſs will ſhew. The prophecies, ſays Mr. Elhanan Wincheſter, that 'have been 'fulfilled already, have been accompliſhed in their moſt 'plain and obvious ſenſe: which may ſerve for a rule, by 'which we may, *without danger of miſtake*, interpret

[23] See particularly John v. 28, 29; Acts xvii. 31; and I Theſſ. iv. 16, 17.

'thoſe that are yet to be accompliſhed[24].' To a perſon, who has thought but little on the ſubject, this propoſition ſounds not unreaſonable. Indeed were the ſtatement in the premiſes correct, the concluſion which follows muſt be admitted to be fairly drawn. But, unfortunately, the preliminary obſervation is completely at variance with fact. The actual fulfilment of prophecies has proved, that many of them are literally, and many of them figuratively, expreſſed. The annotators on the apocalypſe, whatever be the country in which they lived, and whatever the ſect to which they attached themſelves, unite in agreeing, that a multitude of its predictions have had their complete accompliſhment, and yet, I believe, not *one* among them all has been *literally* fulfilled.

To prove that *the coming of Chriſt*, and *the coming of the ſon of man* are expreſſions, which ſignify nothing more than either the commencement of the Meſſiah's kingdom, or the eſtabliſhment of it, I ſhall quote Mat. xvi, 28, and Mark ix. 1. What our Lord ſaid on a particular occaſion the firſt of theſe evangeliſts thus expreſſes: *verily I ſay unto you, there be ſome ſtanding here, which ſhall not taſte of death, till they ſee the Son of man coming in his kingdom.* This Mark records with the following variation: *verily I ſay unto you there be ſome af them that ſtand here, which ſhall not taſte of death, till they have ſeen the kingdom of God come with power.* The meaning is, ſome of thoſe who now hear me ſhall live to ſee the Chriſtian diſpenſation eſtabliſhed: the goſpel being widely propagated and having a powerful influence. It could not mean, that ſome ſhould live to ſee him come in perſon, for that they had already done.

The moſt zealous defender of the doctrine of Chriſt's reſidence upon earth, with theſe two paſſages before him, cannot but acknowledge, however averſe he may be to

[24] Lectures on the Prophecies, 1789. vol. I. p. 31.

make

make the acknowledgement, that *the coming of the kingdom of God*, and *the coming of the Son of man*, are employed by the evangeliſts as ſynonimous expreſſions, and that the latter is uſed, where it cannot poſſibly ſignify his perſonal advent.

In the 29th v. of the xxivth ch. of Matthew it is ſaid, *the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken*: in the 30th it is ſaid, *they ſhall ſee the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven*. To underſtand the word *heavens* in the firſt of theſe contiguous clauſes figuratively, and to interpret the word *heaven* in the ſecond literally, is obviouſly unreaſonable.

But the ſtrongeſt objection againſt the hypotheſis of Chriſt's actual advent, and his reign upon earth, is, I apprehend, not to be deduced from the collation of paſſages, nor from an application of the canons of verbal criticiſm. It is drawn from a conſideration of thoſe moral laws which the Deity has eſtabliſhed, and from the nature of things. As the perſonal reign of Jeſus would be a perpetual miracle, it would be totally oppoſite to the general plan of God's adminiſtration of the world, and inconſiſtent with that ſtate of probation and diſcipline in which human-kind are placed. That the full force of this objection may be diſcerned, ſome obſervations of archdeacon Paley ſhall be tranſcribed. Were the proof of revelation irreſiſtible, it 'would reſtrain the voluntary powers too 'much; would not anſwer the purpoſe of trial and pro-'bation; would call for no exerciſe of candour, ſeriouſ-'neſs, humility, inquiry; no ſubmiſſion of paſſions, in-'tereſts, and prejudices, to moral evidence and to pro-'bable truth; no habits of reflexion; none of that pre-'vious deſire to learn and to obey the will of God, which 'forms perhaps the teſt and the merit of the virtuous 'principle.—Irreſiſtible evidence would confound all 'characters and all diſpoſitions. Would ſubvert, rather

'than promote, the true purpoſe of the divine councils, 'which is not to produce obedience by a force little ſhort 'of mechanical conſtraint (which obedience would be regu-'larity not virtue, and would hardly perhaps differ from 'that which inanimate bodies pay to the laws impreſſed 'upon their nature), but to treat moral agents agreeably to 'what they are; which is done, when light and motives 'are of ſuch kinds, and are imparted in ſuch meaſures, 'that the influence of them depends upon the recipients 'themſelves[25].'

There are two declarations of our Lord himſelf, which militate ſo ſtrongly againſt the idea, that the ſignal of the proper kingdom of Chriſt will be his deſcent upon earth, and that he will then aſſume the character of a terreſtrial monarch, that they particularly deſerve to be cited. The firſt is his memorable ſaying before Pilate, *My kingdom is not of this world*[26]. The ſecond is his anſwer to the Phariſees reſpecting the nature of his kingdom, *The kingdom of God cometh not with obſervation: neither ſhall they ſay, Lo, here! or, lo, there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you*[27]. 'The kingdom of the Meſſiah 'or Chriſt,' ſays bp. Pearce, 'is not to be of that kind as 'ye expect, and which has outward ſhew and pomp to 'make it obſervable[28].' It is not of ſuch a nature, ſays Whitby, 'that a man may be able to ſay from the luſtre 'of its firſt appearance, Lo, it is here, or it is there.'

After again predicting in the 26th v. of ch. vii. the downfal of the papacy and antichriſtian monarchies of Europe, Daniel ſays in the following verſe, *and the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatneſs of the kingdom under the whole heaven, ſhall be given to the people of the*

[25] Evid. of Chriſtianity, vol. II. p. 368, 371.

[26] John xviii. 36. Our Lord does not employ here the word αιων but κοσμος.

[27] Luk. xvii. 20, 21. [28] In loc.

*ſaints*

*ſaints of the moſt High, whoſe kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom, and all dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him.* That Chriſtians are denominated, in numerous places of the New Teſtament, *holy*, and *a holy nation*, and *ſaints*, Mr. Taylor of Norwich, in his *Key to the Romans*, has ſatisfactorily ſhewn[29].

In St. John's account of the ſeventh trumpet, wherein he announces the deſtruction of them *which deſtroy the earth*, he ſays, THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD ARE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST, AND HE SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER: words, ſays Mr. Lowman, which ſignify, that 'the 'true Chriſtian religion ſhould triumph over all oppo-'ſition, and flouriſh with great ſucceſs and proſperity 'throughout all the future *ages* of *time*.' To the kingdom of Chriſt 'the prophets,' ſays Jortin, 'with one voice, 'have promiſed an eternal duration. Yet St. Paul, in his 'firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, ſays that Chriſt's king-'dom ſhall have an end. To reconcile which with the 'prophecies, we muſt obſerve that the expreſſions, *ever-'laſting*, *for ever*, and *without end*[30], are uſed by ſacred, 'as well as profane authors, in different ſenſes, according 'to the ſubject to which they are applied. When there-'fore it is ſaid, that Chriſt ſhall reign *for ever*, the mean-'ing ſeems to be, that he ſhall reign as long as the world 'laſts; when it is ſaid, that of his kingdom *there ſhall be 'no end*, the meaning is, that it ſhall not paſs away like 'other kingdoms, and that there ſhall be no end of it, till 'the conſummation of all things. *Then cometh the end*, 'ſays St. Paul[31] *when Chriſt ſhall have delivered up the 'kingdom to God even the Father, when he ſhall have put*

[29] Sect. 101.

[30] 'The comparative degree ἀθανατωτερος is uſed by Plato in his *Phædo* 'and *Sympoſ.*' Jortin.

[31] I. Cor. xv. 24, 25.

'*down all rule, and all authority and power; for he muſt* '*reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet*[32].' 'To 'make *for ever* ſignify any *known, limited, determinate* 'period of time is' ſays Mr. Hallett, 'contrary to nature, 'and to the genius of all languages.—It always does, and 'always muſt ſignify a duration that is unknown and un- 'certain among men, ſuch as the duration of the world, 'of a man's life, of a particular relation between two per- 'ſons, &c. Thus, when the pſalmiſt ſays, Chriſt's *throne* '*ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever as the moon*, he means to the 'end of the world, pſalm lxxxix. 37[33].'

After foretelling the deſtruction of the antichriſtian monarchies of Europe in ch. xvii and xix, in the next and two following chapters St. John paints, in highly figurative langauge, the ſtate of the millenniary happineſs.

The ſame courſe, (and it is a very natural one, and has, we ſee, been generally followed) Chriſt himſelf alſo purſues. The deſtruction of the oppreſſive governments of the world he firſt announces, and, having done this, directly ſubjoins a promiſe of the glorious prevalence of his religion, which was *then* to take place. *Immediately after the tribulation of thoſe days ſhall the ſun be darkened, and the moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken. And* THEN *ſhall appear the ſign of the Son of man*[34] *in heaven: and* THEN *ſhall all the tribes*

[32] Diſc. on the Tr. of the Chr. Rel. 2d ed. p. 149.

[33] *Notes on Several Texts of Scripture and Diſcourſes*, vol. III. p. 420. In the book of Numbers it is ſaid (x. 8.), *the ſons of Aaron ſhall blow with the trumpets, and they ſhall be to you for an ordinance for ever.* The following explication of the verſe is Dr. Clarke's. 'For *ever*, that is; as long as 'your government and eſtabliſhment ſhall laſt.' Serm. vol. I. ſerm. IV.

[34] 'A late author (John Buxtorf) hath eaſed us of all our diſputes about 'this ſign, by ſhewing that as *the ſign of Jonas the prophet*, Mat. xii. 39, is 'the ſign which is Jonas the prophet; ſo *the* ſign of *the Son of man* inquired 'after,

*tribes of the earth mourn*[35], *and they ſhall ſee the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*[36]. 'We have no reaſon to think,' ſays Dr. Campbell, 'that a particular phænomenon in the ſky is here 'ſuggeſted. The ſtriking evidences, which would be 'given of the divine preſence, and avenging juſtice, are a 'ſufficient juſtification of the terms.' Let it not here eſcape the recollection of the reader, that the expreſſions, *the earth*, and *the tribes of the earth*, are ſometimes ſymbolic, and ſignify thoſe, who having inclinations altogether ſordid and earthly act in direct oppoſition to the true intereſts of Chriſtianity. Such appears to be the meaning in this place. 'Who,' aſks Daubuz, 'at the 'ſecond *coming of Chriſt*, ſhall lament, but the obſtinate 'idolaters and oppoſers of Chriſt? Theſe, which ſhall 'remain at that coming, and perſiſt in their enmity to 'Chriſt, ſhall be the ſubject of his judgment and vengeance; and ſhall therefore have occaſion to lament; 'but others ſhall have no ſuch reaſon. So that *the tribes 'of the earth* include none but Chriſt's enemies[37].'

Our

'after, Mat. xxiv. 3, is *the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven.* And 'this interpretation is confirmed from the parallel places, Mark xiii. 26. 'Luk. xxi. 27.' By Gerard Voſſius (*Theſes Theol.* 1658, p. 228.), by Wolfius, and a crowd of other writers that might be alleged, this explication of the phraſe has been noted and adopted.

[35] Πασαι αἱ φυλαι της γης, i. e. all the different claſſes of antichriſtian perſons.

[36] Mat. xxiv. 29, 30.

[37] Verſe 7 of ch. i. of the apocalypſe is the parallel paſſage, upon which this learned writer comments. It is there ſaid, that *they who pierced him ſhall ſee him* coming *with clouds*, i. e. the nation who crucified him, the Jews, who ſhall happen to be living at the commencement of the millennium, ſhall no longer be blind to the truth and evidences of the goſpel, but ſhall be converted, and ſhall ſee it producing the moſt powerful effects. Of *them* alſo it may, in one ſenſe, be ſaid, that they ſhall *mourn*: for on their former infidelity they will look back with ſorrow; and ſhame; and will lament, that it was

by

Our Lord immediately added in the words that follow, as recorded by Mark, *and then ſhall he ſend his angels*[38], *and ſhall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermoſt part of the earth to the uttermoſt part of heaven*[39].' Bp. Newton, when commenting on the correſponding verſe in Matthew, ſays, 'this is all in the 'ſtyle and phraſeology of the prophets, and ſtript of its 'figures meaneth only, that—Chriſt by his angels or mi-'niſters will gather to himſelf a glorious church out of 'all the nations under heaven[40].' That the belief of Chriſtianity will at length penetrate to every corner of the globe, does, indeed, appear to be the ſignification of the paſſage; and, in conformity with this interpretation, the prelate from whom I have juſt quoted remarks, that 'the *elect* is a well known appellation in ſcripture 'and antiquity for the Chriſtians[41].'

by their anceſtors and by their nation, that the holy Jeſus was deſpiſed, and perſecuted, and at length ſtretched upon the croſs. Accordingly our Lord's words, that *the tribes of the earth ſhall mourn*, if regarded not as ſymbolic, but as literal, muſt in this manner be excluſively applied, as they formerly have been, to the Jews.

[38] The original would have been better tranſlated by the word *meſſengers*, as it is in the verſions of Wakefield and Doddridge.

[39] Mark xiii. 27.

[40] Vol. II. p. 284. 'By the *angels* in this clauſe are to be underſtood 'the miniſters of the goſpel.—Agreeably to this interpretation, we find 'the name αγγελος, *angel*, given to common meſſengers, James ii. 25, and 'to the miniſters of the Aſian churches, Rev. ii. and to prophets, II. 'Chron, xxxvi. 16, and to prieſts, Mal. ii. 7.' Macknight in loc.

[41] Vol. II. p. 254. See the ſame obſervation made by archbiſhop Tillotſon, ſer. 239. At firſt the title was peculiar to the Jews. After a copious allegation of inſtances, Dr. Whitby ſays, 'thus have I traced this 'phraſe throughout the whole Old Teſtament, and ſhewed, that it belongs 'not to particular perſons, but to the whole Jewiſh church and people in 'general; to the bad as well as to the good. 'And, 'in the New Teſtament, 'all Chriſtians, called to the knowledge and belief of the faith, are ſtyled 'the elect.' vol. i. p. 328, and vol. ii. p. 709. He proves, that it had alſo, in the Fathers, a ſimilar acceptation.

Should

Should the writer of the preſent work be charged with having quoted ſome parts of the prophecy of Jeſus with a tireſome frequency; beſides obſerving, that in no inſtance has he needleſsly recurred to it, he replies, that this repetition has been admitted, becauſe our Lord's words merit more than ordinary regard, becauſe he was ſolicitous that their genuine meaning might be cloſely ſcrutinized, and becauſe no one writer has hitherto, in an explicit manner, drawn from them all thoſe important concluſions, which are deducible from a minute and careful inveſtigation of them. As the doctrine of Chriſt's actual advent upon earth, at the commencement of the millennium, has recently received the ſanction of a celebrated name, this point alſo he has been prompted to conſider at greater length, than might otherwiſe perhaps have been neceſſary.

Dr. Prieſtley, in one of the moſt recent of his ſermons, declared himſelf decidedly an advocate for it, as well as for the opinion, that the martyrs will at that period be literally raiſed from the dead. The following are two of the reaſons he has alleged to prove Chriſt's perſonal appearance. 'That the great antichriſtian power is to be 'deſtroyed at this ſecond coming of Chriſt, and not pro-'perly before, and therefore that its final deſtruction 'will be *ſudden*, is evident from what St. Paul ſays, '2 Theſſ. ii, 8, *Then ſhall that wicked one be revealed, 'whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his 'mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his com-'ing*[42].' So far from regarding this as evident, I ſhould, I confeſs, apprehend, that the apoſtle's expreſſions lead to an almoſt oppoſite concluſion; and ſhould conceive them probably to denote, that the dawn of light and knowledge would grow brighter and brighter, and that

[42] Faſt-Serm. for Feb. 28, 1794, p. 9.

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the millennium, or proper kingdom of the Meſſiah, would be gradual in its advances. 'That this will be a proper 'kingdom, though a kingdom of righteouſneſs, the ob- 'ject of which will be the happineſs of the ſubjects of it, 'is,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley,' farther evident from the other 'kingdoms which are to be overthrown in order to make 'way for it. For had it been that purely ſpiritual king- 'dom, which ſome ſuppoſe, what occaſion was there 'for the deſtruction of the other kingdoms; ſince they 'would not have interfered with it, but might have ſub- 'ſiſted at the ſame time[43]?' To my mind there does not appear here a ſhadow of difficulty; and I ſhould feel no heſitation in replying, that, without the ſuppoſition of Chriſt aſſuming a regal character upon earth, there *was* abundant occaſion for the deſtruction of the exiſting governments of the European continent, and that they would not only interfere, but would be abſolutely incompatible with the eſtabliſhment of Chriſt's kingdom. The principles of profligacy and virtue can never form an harmonious mixture: joint dominion can never be poſſeſſed by tyranny and freedom: one and the ſame ſpace can never be occupied by light and darkneſs.

That the prophecies on this ſubject were once viewed by this eminent writer in a different light, the following citation from his *Inſtitutes* will prove. 'Some have ſup- 'poſed that Chriſt himſelf will reign in perſon upon earth, 'and that the martyrs will actually riſe from the dead, 'and live with him, but, conſidering the figurative lan- 'guage of prophecy, it is more probable, that the re- 'vival of the cauſe for which they ſuffered is, in reality, 'the thing denoted by it. Beſides, it is contrary to the 'clear ſenſe of many paſſages of ſcripture, that any per- 'ſons, however diſtinguiſhed by their virtues or ſuffer-

[43] Ut ſupra, p. 4.

'ings,

'ings, ſhould receive their reward before the great day 'of judgment, after the general reſurrection. Dr. Whitby 'has alſo advanced other very ſufficient arguments againſt 'the literal interpretation of the millennium[44].' And Dr. Prieſtley elſewhere obſerves (and the obſervation is very important), that 'the utter deſtruction of Antichriſt '—is often denominated in the ſcriptures by *the coming* '*of* Chriſt[45].'

The very brief remarks which have juſt been made in anſwer to the laſt of Dr. Prieſtley's arguments remind me of an objection, which may poſſibly have occured, during the peruſal of the preſent chapter, to the mind of the attentive reader. It is true, it may be ſaid, we have ſeen the monarchy of France actually overturned. But how does it appear, in point of fact, that the ſymbolic *ſtone* deſcribed in the iid. ch. of Daniel, which *was cut out without hands*, is likely to produce any conſiderable effect in *ſmiting* the monarchical *image*, and in *breaking* into pieces *the toes of the feet* of that image? On the contrary, is it not apparent, that the cauſes, which will give birth to this great cataſtrophe, will ariſe entirely from a different ſource; and is there not reaſon to conclude, that Chriſtianity has been ſcarcely at all injurious, and is not likely to be hereafter injurious, to the tyrannical monarchies of the European world? As the objection does not appear deſtitute of weight, and has, I believe, never been anſwered, it ſhall be conſidered at conſiderable length.

That the emblem of the ſymbolic ſtone has been generally viewed in too narrow a light, is the obſervation with which I commence. Chriſtianity is a religion, which treats all men as on a footing of equality; which elevates them into candidates of the ſame crown of immortality;

[44] Vol. II. p. 416. [45] Vol. II. p. 412.

which

which breathes a ſpirit of mildneſs and of mercy; which at once teaches, inſpires, and exemplifies benevolence. The ſymbolic ſtone, then, ſignifies not merely the peculiar doctrines, but likewiſe the great principles, of Chriſtianity; the immortal principles of benevolence[46], juſtice, and equality. And let it be remembered, that this part of the prophecy is only beginning to be accompliſhed. The ſeveral toes of the monarchical ſtatue are ſtill nearly entire in point of number, though ſomewhat ſhattered in point of ſtrength. That we ſhould be able, at preſent, to offer a completely ſatisfactory explication of the whole of Daniel's prophecy, is, therefore, far from being reaſonable to expect.

If, however, it be true, that, independently of the predictions contained in the ſacred writings, the New Teſtamant does abound with precepts, which are likely eminently to contribute to the humbling of the proud and the deliverance of the oppreſſed, to the overthrow of all uſurped power, to the eſtabliſhment of mild and equitable laws, and to the general prevalence of correct ideas on the great queſtion of juſtice between man and man; it ſurely is no very improbable ſuppoſition, (now that the ſpirit of political inquiry has ariſen in Europe, and the minds of men are turned with ſo much eagerneſs to the examination of the nature, and the comparative advantages, of different governments,) that the time is not far diſtant, when genuine Chriſtians will in general view the exiſting governments of the European continent as decidedly antichriſtian; and when many of them will take an active part in ſubſtituting in their place political inſtitutions, which do not violate the rights of man and the laws of the goſpel. That the decided majority of a

[46] *By this ſhall men know, that ye are my diſciples, if you have love one to another.* John, xiii. 35.

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nation have a right to pull down an old government, and erect a new one, if they think it expedient, I conceive to be a point admitting not of diſpute.

Of the abuſes that exiſt in the world a large part ariſe from the tyranny of the rich over the poor, and from the extreme inequality of conditions, an evil which is aggravated, and, indeed, engendered, by the maxims and conſtitutions of the exiſting governments. Now Jeſus, it may be remarked, ſelected his friends and diſciples from among the poor, intereſted himſelf with the warmeſt ſolicitude in their behalf, connected his religion with their intereſts and the preſervation of their rights, pointed frequently to the miſchiefs which almoſt neceſſarily reſult from the poſſeſſion of great wealth, and ſpoke, in language unuſually ſtrong and little limited in its application, againſt the vices and the conduct of the rich.

Jeſus, ſays the preſent biſhop of Worceſter, firſt and principally preached the Goſpel to the poor. 'Our 'Lord's whole miniſtry ſeems uniformly directed to this 'end of beating down the inſolence of all worldly diſ-'tinctions, which had too much vilified and degraded 'human nature.' In truth, 'he ſeems ſtudiouſly to have 'bent his whole endeavours, to vindicate the honour of 'depreſſed humanity[47].'

Hoſtile to all claims of human authority in matters of conſcience and of opinion, Chriſtianity is *on that account* favourable to liberty and to knowledge, and is of courſe adverſe to the eccleſiaſtical part of the modern governments[48].

An author of more than uſual merit, after declaring that war is 'a ſtate in which it becomes our buſineſs to

[47] Bp. Hurd's Serm. preached at Lincoln's-Inn. vol. III. p. 153, 154.

[48] See the quotations which occur in p. 234, 239—243, and 253—255 of the preſent work.

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'hurt and annoy our neighbour by every poſſible means; 'inſtead of cultivating, to deſtroy; inſtead of building, to 'pull down; inſtead of peopling, to depopulate; a ſtate 'in which we drink the tears, and feed upon the miſery, 'of our fellow-creatures;' briefly comments on the methods, by which the European governments have contrived to aſſociate it with the religion of Jeſus. Their prayers, ſays this ingenious writer, 'if put into plain lan-'guage, would run thus: God of love, father of all the 'families of the earth, we are going to tear in pieces our 'brethren of mankind, but our ſtrength is not equal to 'our fury, we beſeech thee to aſſiſt us in the work of 'ſlaughter. Go out, we pray thee, with our fleets and 'armies; we call them Chriſtian, and we have inter-'woven in our banners, and the decorations of our arms, 'the ſymbols of a ſuffering religion, that we may fight un-'der the croſs upon which our Saviour died. Whatever 'miſchief we do, we ſhall do it in thy name; we hope, 'therefore, thou wilt protect us in it. Thou, who haſt 'made of one blood all the dwellers upon the earth, we 'truſt thou wilt view us alone with partial favour, and 'enable us to bring miſery upon every other quarter of 'the globe[49].' Whether ſupplications, which have ideas ſimilar to theſe for their genuine import, and which the members of the different hierarchies are ſo often compelled to utter, are, or are not, in direct oppoſition to the benign ſpirit and the pacific precepts of the goſpel, are queſtions which its moſt unlettered reader can feel no embaraſſment in anſwering.

Of the regular governments of Europe war is one of the moſt favourite practices. But 'that the general ten-'dency of the goſpel is to extinguiſh the ſpirit of conten-

[49] Sins of Government, Sins of the Nation; or a Diſcourſe for the Faſt, appointed on April 19, 1793, by a Volunteer, p. 26, 31.

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'tion need not,' says a learned prelate, 'be proved; 'its ancient adversaries were so sensible of this, that they 'turned, what should have been its commendation, into 'a matter of reproach, and reprobated it, because it gave 'many precepts to avoid the commission of injuries, and 'injunctions to forgive them, but none to avenge them.— 'Christianity, in its regards, steps beyond the narrow 'bounds of national advantage in quest of universal good; 'it does not encourage particular patriotism in opposition 'to general benignity.' Indeed 'were all the nations of 'the earth converted to the Christian religion, and the 'individuals of those nations not nominal merely but real 'Christians, it would be utterly impossible for a state of 'war ever to have a beginning amongst them[50].'

An ingenious defender of the Christian religion, happening to have been a Lord of Trade, and a member of the British senate, does, naturally enough, entertain views on the subject of government, which are dark and distorted. Plainly perceiving, that, as at present conducted, it is completely at variance with the precepts of the gospel, he has fallen into the error of supposing, that these precepts are inconsistent with all government. 'Govern-'ment,' says he, '*cannot* be managed without certain de-'grees of violence, corruption, and imposition; yet are 'all these strictly forbid. Nations *cannot* subsist without 'wars, nor war be carried on without rapine, desolation, 'and murder; yet are these prohibited under the severest 'threats[51].'

The influence of Christianity, with respect to the overthrow of the antichristian monarchies, may be placed also in another point of view. Though the religion of Jesus is far from possessing that powerful efficacy, which it may be

[50] Bp. Watson's Sermons and Tracts, 1788, p. 109, 111, 113.
[51] View of the Intern. Evid. of the Chr. Rel. p. 134.

expected hereafter to exert in more favourable circumstances; yet it cannot be doubted by any man, acquainted with human nature and with history, that its effects are great and invaluable. Now I maintain, that Christianity, by having made a large proportion of the inhabitants of Europe either partially or in the main virtuous, has on that account powerfully disposed them to entertain sentiments hostile to those oppressive systems of government which at present subsist; and, when a proper occasion calls for their assistance, and the great interests of mankind are at stake, to exercise that degree of activity, and personally to encounter those dangers, which cannot but be attendant on the establishment of a new order of things. He who is acquainted with the deplorable state of morals in the heathen world, at the æra of Christ's appearance, and with the imbecillity of the efforts which philosophy had employed to check the growth of vice, cannot, I think, but suspect, that, had that religion never been revealed, there would not have been a sufficient portion of virtue, disinterestedness, and public spirit now existing among mankind, to accomplish those important changes in the political world, of which reason and scripture authorize us to cherish such pleasing hopes. On this subject I cannot transcribe any passage more in unison with my ideas, than the following sentiments of one of the most elevated members of the English hierarchy. 'True Christianity will produce true patriotism and public spirit. 'By its commanding influence over the soul, it will keep 'under, and bring into subjection, all those irregular pas'sions which render men rapacious, sordid, selfish, and 'corrupt, indifferent and inattentive to the public, de'voted solely to the pursuit of some favourite object, or 'the gratification of some implacable resentment, to which 'they are at any time ready to prostitute their consciences, 'and sacrifice the true interest of their country. From all

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'theſe vile impediments to the diſcharge of our duty, 'Chriſtianity ſets us free, and ſubſtitutes in their room 'the nobleſt and moſt generous ſentiments. It gives that 'dignity and elevation of ſoul, which is ſuperior to every 'undue influence, either of popularity or of power. It 'lays down, as the foundation of all diſintereſted con-'duct, that great evangelical virtue, ſelf-denial: it teaches 'us to deny, to renounce ourſelves; to throw entirely 'out of our thoughts, our own prejudices, intereſts, and 'paſſions; and, in every public queſtion, to ſee nothing, 'to regard nothing, but the real welfare of our country. '—It extends our proſpect beyond the preſent ſcene of 'things, and ſets before us the recompences of a future 'life; which, as they make us *richer*, enable us to be 'more *generous*, than other men. They whoſe views 'are wholly centered in this world will too often prefer 'the emoluments of it to every other conſideration: but 'they, who look towards an inheritance in another ſtate of 'exiſtence, can *afford* to give up to the general welfare, 'a few advantages in this [52].'

From the regular practice of Chriſtianity courage alſo will be likely to reſult. 'A conſciouſneſs of having diſ-'charged our duty, of being at peace with God, and of 'living under his gracious ſuperintendence, will give us 'a ſpirit, a firmneſs, and intrepidity of ſoul, which no-

[52] The following is the ſtatement of another writer, the ingenious Dr. Duchal. 'The ſelfiſh ſpirit of this world ſtands in direct oppoſition to 'charity; as the one prevails, the other muſt give way. He that thinks 'and acts as if he were made only for himſelf; as if he were alone in the 'midſt of the earth; as if he were to take care of nothing but his own in-'tereſt, and regard his neighbours no otherwiſe than as they may be the 'means of promoting it; who thus acts as if he had no principle but ſelf-'love in him, and therefore as to his moral frame is really monſtrous; 'ſuch an one, I ſay, muſt be an utter ſtranger, as to true charity, ſo to 'the Chriſtian ſpirit.' Chriſtianity, indeed, 'ſtrikes at the very root of 'this temper.' Dr. Duchal's Sermons, vol. I. p. 96.

'thing elſe can inſpire. Suppoſing all other circumſtances 'equal, the ſincere Chriſtian will have many incitements 'to face danger with a ſteady countenance, which the 'irreligious cannot have. Under the defence of the Moſt 'High, he has leſs cauſe to fear the worſt, and more rea-'ſon to hope the beſt, than thoſe that live without God 'in the world. *The wicked*, therefore, *flee when no man 'purſueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion*[53]. Even 'death itſelf has, to the real Chriſtian, no terrors.—In-'ſtead of being to him, as it is to the worldly man, the 'extinction of his hopes, it is the conſummation of them, 'and puts him in poſſeſſion of thoſe heavenly treaſures on 'which his heart is fixed. He, therefore, goes on with 'cool undaunted compoſure to the diſcharge of his duty, 'whatever difficulties, whatever dangers may ſtand in 'his way; conſcious that he is acting under the eye of 'an Almighty Being, who can both protect and reward 'him; who has commanded him, if it be neceſſary, *to 'lay down his life for his brethren*[54]; and who will never 'ſuffer him to be a loſer in the end, even by that laſt and 'greateſt ſacrifice to the public good[55].'

Thus then it appears from the teſtimony of a prelate who ſtands high in royal favour, that Chriſtianity, by implanting in the boſoms of its genuine followers diſintereſtedneſs and courage, eminently qualifies them for taking an active and zealous part in the ſubverſion of every profligate government, and in the erection of a new and more benevolent ſyſtem. Nor let it be ſuppoſed, that the precepts of Jeſus, which enjoin the practice of patience and the forgiveneſs of injuries, prohibit our reſiſtance to the tyranny of princes. On this point another of our prelates, who is alſo diſtinguiſhed by the

[53] Prov XXVIII. 1. [54] 1 John III. 16.
[55] Bp. Porteus's Serm. p. 261, 265.

ſmiles

ſmiles of royalty and an averſion to French principles, may ſafely be liſtened to. 'The uſe of the natural paſ-'ſion of reſentment is not,' ſays the biſhop of Worceſter, 'ſuperſeded by the law of Jeſus. For the legitimate uſe 'of this paſſion is to quicken us in repelling ſuch injuries, 'as would render human life wholly burthenſome and un-'eaſy to us, not of thoſe petty affronts and diſcourteſies, 'which afflict us much leſs by being diſſembled and for-'given, than by being reſented and returned. Now Chriſ-'tianity does not require us to renounce the right of na-'ture in repelling injuries of the former claſs. The law 'in queſtion, as explained by our Lord himſelf, does 'not, we have ſeen, import thus much: and for the reſt 'the appeal is open to the principles of nature and com-'mon ſenſe.—The practice of the apoſtles (the beſt com-'ment on the law) ſhews, too, that, on certain critical 'and urgent occaſions, they ſcrupled not to take ad-'vantage of thoſe principles. So that univerſally, as it 'would ſeem, where the ends of ſelf-preſervation, or of 'prepollent public utility, require and juſtify reſiſtance 'in other men, there it is left free for Chriſtians, like-'wiſe, *to reſiſt evil*; the purpoſe of their divine legiſlator 'being, in this inſtance, to explain the law of nature, and 'to guard it from the abuſe of our haſty paſſions, not to 'abrogate, or ſuſpend it.' The goſpel 'allows men to 'aſſert their eſſential civil intereſts by every reaſonable 'exertion of firmneſs and courage; nay, inculcates thoſe 'principles of a diſintereſted love for mankind, and what 'is properly called a public ſpirit, which make it their 'duty to do ſo. And they will not do it with the leſs 'effect, for waiting till the provocation given appear to 'all men to be without excuſe. *The fury of a patient man* 'is almoſt proverbial; and, particularly, in this caſe, it 'is to be expected, that, when the natural incitement to 'reſiſtance, long repreſſed and moderated, comes at length

'to be authoriſed by neceſſity, and quickened by a ſenſe 'of duty, it will act with a force and conſtancy, not a 'little formidable to thoſe, againſt whom it is directed. 'There is no danger, then, that true patriotiſm ſhould 'ſuffer by the meek principles of peace[56].'

The following is the ſtatement of an enlightened man, who was himſelf alike diſtinguiſhed by a ſpirit of piety and a ſpirit of patriotiſm. 'In vain ſhall we expect to 'meet with an heart, truly animated with zeal for its coun-'try's cauſe, in a breaſt which is deſtitute of piety to God. 'Let hiſtory unfold her inſtructive page; her records will 'eſtabliſh the truth of this great, this important maxim, 'that there is no reliance upon that ſteady perſevering 'virtue, which true patriotiſm requires, where the prin-'ciples of religion and of public ſpirit are not inſeparably 'united.—The beneficial efficacy of religion, in control-'ling that ſelfiſh principle, to which all the diſorders of 'human life are to be referred, is ſo apparent, that the 'worſt of men have frequently been induced to aſſume 'the appearance of it, though their hearts are ſtrangers to 'its real power and practice[57].'

In order to eſtimate, *to what extent* Chriſtianity will be ſerviceable to the cauſe of civil liberty, on any important criſis, by prediſpoſing men to ſtand forward in the rank of its defenders, and enabling them worthily to ſupport the character, there are ſome other circumſtances, to which it will be neceſſary briefly to advert. Let it be remembered, that, in the preſent ſtate of the European governments, now that they are arrived at an unexampled pitch of corruption, when they are guarded by an im-menſe number of intereſted ſupporters, who are ſo pow-erful from their wealth, their functions, and the mul-

[56] Hurd's Serm. preached at Lincoln's Inn, vol. III. p. 288, 293.
[57] Dr. Jebb's Works, vol. II. p. 44, 49.

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titude of their dependants; a more than ordinary proportion of virtue and of firmneſs ſeems requiſite in the community, in order to effect a reform of abuſes and to accompliſh a change in the ſyſtem. In ſome countries, the ſtruggle is likely to be obſtinately conteſted; *and a ſmall matter, perhaps, would be ſufficient to turn the ſcale.* Never were the holders of loans, the fulfillers of contracts, and the expectants of places, equally numerous; with reſpect to thoſe, who reap emolument from ſtations in the army, the navy, or the church, together with thoſe who fill legal, financial, and municipal ſituations, never did they conſtitute throughout Europe a body of perſons, ſo averſe to reformation, and devoted to the cauſe of tyranny. In this ſituation of things, it cannot then be doubted, that, at the period when the happineſs of all is about to ſucceed to the oppreſſions of the few, every friend of his country, who combines activity with virtue, muſt prepare to make numerous ſacrifices.

But whatever ſacrifices it may be neceſſary to make, whatever dangers it may be neceſſary to encounter, it cannot be doubted, that there are circumſtances, in which it would be criminal not to oppoſe, in the moſt open manner, the plunderers of mankind. The following extract is from a dignitary of the church, whoſe literary productions are highly eſtimated in our univerſities, and whoſe opinions are liſtened to by the clergy with great attention and reſpect. 'It may be as much a duty, at one time, to 'reſiſt government, as it is, at another, to obey it; to 'wit, whenever more advantage will, in our opinion, ac-'crue to the community, from reſiſtance, than miſchief.' If, ſays the ſame ſagacious writer in another place, I ſhould be accoſted by a perſon, 'with complaints of pub-'lic grievances, of exorbitant taxes, of acts of cruelty 'and oppreſſion, of tyrannical encroachments upon the 'ancient or ſtipulated rights of the people, and ſhould be

'consulted, whether it were lawful to revolt, or justifiable 'to join in an attempt to shake off the yoke by open re-'sistance;—I should reply, that if public expediency be 'the foundation, it is also the measure, of civil obedience; 'that the obligation of subjects and sovereigns is reci-'procal; that the duty of allegiance, whether it be found-'ed in utility or compact, is neither unlimited nor uncon-'ditional; that peace may be purchased too dear; that 'patience becomes culpable pusillanimity, when it serves 'only to encourage our rulers to increase the weight of 'our burthen, or to bind it the faster; that the submission 'which surrenders the liberty of a nation, and entails sla-'very upon future generations, is enjoined by no rational 'morality: finally, I should instruct him to compare the 'peril and expence of his enterprize with the effects it was 'expected to produce, and to make choice of the alter-'native, by which not his own present relief or profit, 'but the whole and permanent interest of the state, was 'likely to be best promoted[58].' Now the time is probably not very remote, when, in different countries of the European continent, a decided majority of the inhabitants will be of opinion, that 'the permanent interest of the state,' and that of the whole of the people, will be best promoted by the overthrow of the existing governors, though the attendant convulsion should expose multitudes to the hazard of suffering, for a time, considerable inconveniencies and calamities.

Of those, in whose bosoms joy beats the highest, on account of the great and glorious events which produced

[58] Archdeacon Paley's Principles of Mor. and Pol. Phil. 7 ed. vol. II. p. 144, 155. Were this a place proper for the discussion, or were the lawfulness of resisting the tyranny of princes a question which admitted of a shadow of doubt, it would be easy to accumulate the names of celebrated persons who have asserted it. Such are Milton, Grotius and Buchanan, Sydney and Locke, lords Russel and Somers, judge Blackstone and lord Camden.

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the French revolution, a large part, we know in point of fact, were perſons attached to religion and zealous for its intereſts. I think it alſo probable, that there will be many ſincere believers in Chriſtianity among thoſe diſtinguiſhed political writers, who will undoubtedly, after a time, ariſe in France[59], and who will, it is apprehended, through the medium of literature, and by the weapons of argument, undermine the ſubſiſting tyrannies, which the armies and valour of their countrymen had before ſo openly attacked and ſo materially endangered.

There is alſo another point of view, in which Chriſtianity is ſerviceable to Civil Liberty. 'The temple,' ſays one of the moſt elegant writers in our language, 'is 'the only place where human beings, of every rank and 'ſex and age, meet together for one common purpoſe, 'and join together in one common act. Other meetings 'are either political, or formed for the purpoſes of ſplen-'dor and amuſement; from both which, in this country, 'the bulk of inhabitants are of neceſſity excluded. This 'is the only place, to enter which nothing more is neceſ-'ſary than to be of the ſame ſpecies: the only place, 'where man meets man not only as an equal but a bro-'ther; and where, by contemplating his duties, he may 'become ſenſible of his rights. So high and haughty is 'the ſpirit of ariſtocracy, and ſuch the increaſing pride 'of the privileged claſſes, that it is to be feared, if men 'did not attend at the ſame place here, it would hardly be 'believed they were meant to go to the ſame place here-'after. It is of ſervice to the cauſe of freedom therefore,

[59] To the probability of this poſition many of my readers will probably refuſe to aſſent. Should the author of the preſent work publiſh a pamphlet, which is in a great degree written, and which treats on the effects which the French Revolution is likely ultimately to produce with reſpect to Chriſtianity, he will there ſtate the grounds of the opinion which he has hazarded in the text.

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'no leſs than to that of virtue, that there is one place,
'where the invidious diſtinctions of wealth and titles are
'not admitted; where all are equal, not by making the
'low, proud, but by making the great, humble. How
'many a man exiſts who poſſeſſes not the ſmalleſt pro-
'perty in this earth of which you call him lord; who, from
'the narrowing ſpirit of property, is circumſcribed and
'hemmed in by the poſſeſſions of his more opulent neigh-
'bours, till there is ſcarcely an unoccupied ſpot of ver-
'dure on which he can ſet his foot to admire the beauties
'of nature, or barren mountain on which he can draw
'the freſh air without a treſpaſs. The enjoyments of life
'are for others, the labours of it for him. He hears thoſe
'of his claſs ſpoken of collectively, as of machines, which
'are to be kept in repair indeed, but of which the ſole uſe
'is to raiſe the happineſs of the higher orders. Where,
'but in the temple of religion, ſhall he learn that he is of
'the ſame ſpecies? He hears there (and were it for the
'firſt time it would be with infinite aſtoniſhment), that all
'are conſidered as alike ignorant and to be inſtructed; all
'alike ſinful and needing forgiveneſs; all alike bound by
'the ſame obligations, and animated by the ſame hopes.
'In the intercourſes of the world the poor man is ſeen,
'but not noticed; he may be in the preſence of his ſu-
'periors, but he cannot be in their company. In every
'other place it would be preſumption in him to let his
'voice be heard along with theirs; here alone they are
'heard together, and blended in the full chorus of praiſe.
'In every other place it would be an offence to be near
'them, without ſhewing in his attitudes and deportment
'the conſcious marks of inferiority; here only he ſees the
'proſtration of the rich as low as his, and hears them
'both addreſſed together in the majeſtic ſimplicity of a
'language that knows no adulation. Here the poor man
'learns, that, in ſpite of the diſtinctions of rank, and the

'apparent

'apparent inferiority of his condition, all the true goods 'of life, all that men dare petition for when in the pre-'ſence of their maker, a ſound mind, a healthful body, 'and daily bread, lie within the ſcope of his own hopes 'and endeavours; and that, in the large inheritance to 'come, his expectations are no leſs ample than theirs. 'He riſes from his knees, and feels himſelf a man. He 'learns philoſophy without its pride, and a ſpirit of li-'berty without its turbulence. Every time ſocial wor-'ſhip is celebrated, it includes a virtual declaration of the 'rights of man [60].'

And what was the character of the great perſonage, whoſe actions are recorded in the goſpel-narratives, to be admired and to be imitated? Surely it was not ſuch, as ſhould deter men from cheriſhing an ardent fondneſs for their country, or from undertaking the honourable office of a reformer. Chriſt, ſays the accompliſhed writer, whom I have juſt quoted, 'was the Great Reformer, the inno-'vator of his day; and the ſtrain of his energetic elo-'quence was ſtrongly pointed againſt abuſes of all 'kinds [61].'

[60] Mrs. Barbauld's Rem. on Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's Enq. into the Expediency and Propriety of Social Worſhip, p. 43.

[61] Mrs. Barbauld's Rem. ut ſupra, p. 31.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXX.

### ON THE EFFECTS CHRISTIANITY HAS PRODUCED, IN FAVOUR OF FREEDOM, LEARNING, AND VIRTUE.

AS an inquiry into the effects favourable to freedom, which the ſpirit and the principles of Chriſtianity have produced, and are likely to produce, is an inveſti-

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gation of importance, and adapted to leſſen the prejudices againſt Chriſtianity; as I know no writer by whom it has been diſcuſſed at any conſiderable length; as it will furniſh a number of additional facts and arguments in confirmation of thoſe, which have been recently urged in reply to the objection, *with what propriety can the ſymbolic ſtone in Daniel be ſaid to overthrow the ten toes of the monarchical ſtatue*; as it will communicate to the mind of the reader ſome faint idea of the glorious changes, which Chriſtianity will accompliſh in that happy period (the nature of which it has been the deſign of the preceding chapter briefly to unfold), when that divine religion ſhall be authenticated by the fulfilment of innumerable prophecies, ſhall be undiſgraced by its connexion with the civil power, ſhall riſe ſuperior to the attacks of infidelity, and be underſtood with a degree of correctneſs unknown in former times; I ſhall ſcarcely think an apology neceſſary for introducing into the preſent appendix a numerous aſſemblage of extracts.

That the great principles of Chriſtianity are the principles of philanthropy, juſtice, and equality, and that it is altogether incompatible with thoſe ſyſtems of oppreſſion and injuſtice, which at preſent darken the face of the European world, is the argument on which I would lay principal ſtreſs in replying to the objection which has been juſt recited.

The argument which aſſerts that Chriſtianity has promoted the intereſts of freedom, by promoting the intereſts of literature and knowledge, I confeſs, is leſs direct, leſs deciſive, and more liable to objection. That it is not, however, without its weight, the following facts and obſervations will evince.

Few perſons are, I believe, apprized, how great was the danger, that every work of Grecian and Roman litetature would have been deſtroyed in the dark ages, a long

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and melancholy period; when the Barbarians of the North and the Eaſt, and the equally illiterate Mahometans of the South, iſſuing from the moraſs, or the foreſt, or the deſert, laid waſte and ſubdued every province and every city of the Roman empire, excepting Conſtantinople and its immediate environs. Independently alſo of the calamitous effects, reſulting from a permanent anarchy and perpetual wars[62], the ſtate of ſociety and manners ſtrongly tended to precipitate the inhabitants of the Weſtern world into a total ignorance of letters. Scarcely was there any middle rank of citizens. Now knowledge, it is well known, is leaſt cultivated by thoſe in the higheſt and thoſe in the loweſt ranks of life: and the want of it, ſays Dr. Henry, 'was occaſioned by the extreme diſſipation 'of the former, who ſpent almoſt all their time, when 'they were not engaged in war, in rural diverſions or do-'meſtic riots; and by the no leſs extreme depreſſion of 'the latter, who were doomed to perpetual ſervitude and 'hard labour[63].' 'If,' ſays a Scottiſh hiſtorian of greater celebrity and greater genius, 'men do not enjoy the pro-'tection of regular government, together with the ex-'pectation of perſonal ſecurity, which naturally flows 'from it, they never attempt to make progreſs in ſcience. '—In leſs than a century after the barbarous nations ſet-'tled in their new conqueſts, almoſt all the effects of the 'knowledge and civility, which the Romans had ſpread 'through Europe, diſappeared.—The barbarous nations 'were not only illiterate, but regarded literature with con-'tempt. They found the inhabitants of all the provinces 'of the empire, ſunk in effeminacy, and averſe to war. 'Such a character was the object of ſcorn to an high-ſpi-'rited and gallant race of men.—This degeneracy of

[62] On the depredations of the barbarians ſee from p. 409 to 422 of the preſent work.

[63] Hiſt. of Great Britain, 8vo. vol. VI. p. 169.

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'manners illiterate barbarians imputed to their love of 'learning. Even after they ſettled in the countries which 'they had conquered, they would not permit their chil- 'dren to be inſtructed in any ſcience; "for (ſaid they) "inſtruction in the ſciences tends to corrupt, enervate, "and depreſs the mind; and he who has been accuſtomed "to tremble under the rod of a pedagogue, will never "look on a ſword or ſpear with an undaunted eye[64]".— 'The whole hiſtory of the middle ages makes it evident, 'that war was the ſole profeſſion of gentlemen, and the 'only object attended to in their education[65].'

Literature is now ſuperior to contingencies. To annihilate it, is equally beyond the power of barbarians and the efforts of princes. But, from the beginning of the vth to the concluſion of the xiiith century, its exiſtence was precarious and inſecure. Indeed, even at the commencement of this period, when no great number of books had been deſtroyed, they were comparatively ſcarce, as paper was not invented, nor the art of printing diſcovered. In England for inſtance, ſo many books, ſays Dr. Henry, had been carried away, or they had been 'ſo 'entirely deſtroyed by the Scots, Picts, and Saxons, that 'it is a little uncertain, whether there was ſo much as one 'book left in England before the arrival of Auguſtin.' And 'we are,' ſays Dr. Henry, 'aſſured by the illuſ- 'trious Roger Bacon, that there were not above four 'perſons among the Latins, in his time, who underſtood 'Greek[66].'

After regretting the fate of the 'libraries which have 'been involved in the ruin of the Roman empire,' Mr. Gibbon ſays, 'when I ſeriouſly compute the lapſe of

[64] Procopius de Bello Gothor. lib. I. p. 4.

[65] Dr. Robertſon's View of the Progreſs of Society in Europe, 8vo. p. 21, 234, 385.

[66] Hiſt. of Great Britain, vol. IV. p. 20, 81; vol. VIII. p. 188.

'ages,

'ages, the waſte of ignorance, and the calamities of war, 'our treaſures, rather than our loſſes, are the object of my 'ſurpriſe.—We ſhould gratefully remember, that the miſ-'chances of time and accident have ſpared the claſſic 'works to which the ſuffrage of antiquity had adjudged 'the firſt place of genius and glory: the teachers of an-'cient knowledge, who are ſtill extant, had peruſed and 'compared the writings of their predeceſſors; nor can 'it fairly be preſumed, that any important truth, any 'uſeful diſcovery in art or nature, has been ſnatched 'away from the curioſity of modern ages[67].'

But what was the cauſe, that ſo many invaluable remains of the literature of Greece and Rome were reſcued from deſtruction, amidſt the demolition of cities, the downfal of nations, and the overthrow of arts and languages? Of the writings and the languages of Egypt and Carthage ſcarcely the fainteſt veſtige is now any where to be found; though they were two of the ſtates moſt diſtinguiſhed in ancient times for population and power, for opulence and civilization. The latter have periſhed, and the former have been preſerved; and Chriſtianity has been the cauſe of their preſervation. Let us trace its hiſtory, and that of the inſtitutions to which it gave birth; and we ſhall, though aware of the laſting and widely diffuſed depredations of the barbarous nations, ceaſe to feel with Mr. Gibbon any ſurpriſe at the extent of our literary treaſures.

'The keys of learning,' ſays Dr. Jortin, 'are the 'learned languages, and a grammatical and critical ſkill in 'them.—The New Teſtament, being written in Greek, 'cauſed Chriſtians to apply themſelves to the ſtudy of 'that moſt copious and beautiful language.' In order to enable them to confute their adverſaries, and 'to expoſe

[67] Vol. IX, p. 442.

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'the abſurdities of Jewiſh Traditions, the weakneſs of 'Paganiſm, and the imperfections and inſufficiency of 'Philoſophy,—Jewiſh and Pagan literature were neceſ-'ſary, and what we call philology, or claſſical erudi-'tion [68]. And thus the Chriſtians became in learning ſu-'perior to the Pagans.' In the 'third century, the Latin 'language was much upon the decline; but the Chriſ-'tians preſerved it from ſinking into abſolute barbariſm; 'and of the Latin Fathers in this and the following ages, 'it may be affirmed, that moſt of them wrote as well, at 'leaſt, as their Pagan contemporaries, and ſome of them 'better; for this is a fair way of trying their abilities, 'and it is not reaſonable to expect of them that they 'ſhould equal Cæſar or Livy, Salluſt or Cicero.'

Pernicious as were many of the effects which flowed from monaſtic inſtitutions, they were not without their benefits. The monks have 'tranſmitted to us thoſe Latin 'and Greek Claſſics, which we now poſſeſs, and which 'would have periſhed, had it not been for their labours, 'and for the libraries contained in the monaſteries [69]. To 'them

[68] 'The Chriſtian fathers ſtudied the writings of the ancients, firſt, to 'furniſh themſelves with weapons againſt their adverſaries; next, to ſup-'port the Chriſtian doctrine, by maintaining its conſonancy to reaſon, and 'its ſuperiority to the moſt perfect ſyſtems of Pagan wiſdom; and laſtly, 'to adorn themſelves with the embelliſhments of erudition and eloquence. 'Baſil wrote a diſtinct treatiſe, upon the benefits which young perſons 'might receive from reading the writings of heathens. His pupil, Gre-'gory Thaumaturgus, in his panegyric on Origen, inſiſts largely upon the 'ſame topic; highly commending him for having, after the example of 'his preceptor Clemens Alexandrinus induſtriouſly inſtructed his pupils 'in philoſophy.' Dr. Enfield's Hiſt. of Philoſophy, drawn up from Brucker's *Hiſtoria Critica Philoſophiæ*, vol. II. p. 276.

[69] Similar is the ſtatement of Moſheim. Speaking of the ſixth century, he ſays, 'the liberal arts and ſciences would have been *totally extinguiſhed*, 'had they not found a place of refuge, ſuch as it was, among the biſhops 'and the monaſtic orders.' To the monaſteries 'we owe the preſervation 'and

'them we owe copies of the Roman Law, of the Theo-
'dosian and Justinian Codes; and the Roman laws being
'adopted, more or less, in Christian nations, and the study
'of them being honourable and profitable, conduced
'greatly to the preservation of literature in general, and
'of the Latin language in particular.'

Had Christianity been suppressed at its first appearance, and no traces of it been left, 'it is,' says Dr. Jortin, 'ex-
'tremely probable, that the Latin and Greek tongues
'would have been lost in the revolutions of empire, and
'the irruptions of Barbarians in the East and in the West;
'for the old inhabitants would have had no *conscientious*

'and possession of all the ancient authors sacred and profane.' Eccl. Hist. vol. I. p. 437, 438.

'About the beginning of the tenth century, books had,' says Denina, 'become so scarce in Spain, that one and the same copy of the bible, St. 'Jerome's epistles, and some volumes of rules, offices, and etymologies 'often served several monasteries.' Denina's Ess. on the Revolutions of Literature, p. 73. 'One example,' says Dr. Henry, 'will be sufficient to 'give the reader some idea of the price of books in England in the seventh 'century. Benedict Biscop, founder of the monastery of Weremouth in 'Northumberland, made no fewer than five journies to Rome to purchase 'books, vessels, vestments, and other ornaments, for his monastery; by 'which he collected a very valuable library; for one book out of which '(a volume on cosmography), king Aldfred gave him an estate of eight 'hides, or as much land as eight ploughs could labour.' Hist. of Gr. Br. vol. IV. p. 20. The following facts are from Dr. Robertson (View of the Progress of Society, &c. p. 281). 'Lupus, abbot of Ferrieres, in a 'letter to the pope, A. D. 855, beseeches him to lend him a copy of Cicero 'de Oratore and Quintilian's Institutions, "for," says he, "although we "have parts of those books, there is no complete copy of them in all "France."—'The countess of Anjou paid for a copy of the Homilies of 'Haimon, bishop of Halberstadt, 200 sheep, 5 quarters of wheat, and the 'same quantity of rye and millet.—Even so late as the year 1471, when 'Louis XI. borrowed the works of Rasis, the Arabian physician, from the 'faculty of medicine in Paris, he not only deposited in pledge a consi-'derable quantity of plate, but was obliged to procure a nobleman to 'join with him as surety in a deed, binding himself under a great for-'feiture to restore it.'

'and *religious* motives to keep up their languages. And 'then, together with the Latin and Greek tongues, the 'knowledge of antiquities, and the ancient writers, would 'have been deſtroyed. You may ſee ſomething of this 'kind in the preſent ſtate of Afric, where the Latin 'tongue is abſolutely unknown, although in the fifth cen-'tury it was ſpoken there as in Italy. Idolatry and ſu-'perſtition, in ſome ſhape or other, would have been the 'religion of the populace, and the upper ſort would have 'been for the moſt part Sceptics or Atheiſts, with a mix-'ture of ſome Deiſts.'

After urging various other circumſtances, Dr. Jortin concludes his obſervations by aſſerting, 'that the learning 'which now exiſts is, if not ſolely, yet principally to be 'aſcribed to Chriſtianity; and that its Divine Author ſaid 'moſt juſtly of himſelf, in this ſenſe alſo, *I am the light* '*of the world*[70].'

'The Chriſtian religion,' ſays Mr. Coxe, tended in Ruſſia, 'as well as in moſt other countries in Europe, to 'preſerve ſome ſmall remains of literature in the ſchools 'and ſeminaries of the ſeveral monaſteries.' Thus each of theſe manſions of ſuperſtition became an aſylum for the preſervation of knowledge[71]. To the monks of Ruſſia, and to thoſe of the other countries of Europe, we are alſo almoſt excluſively indebted for our knowledge of the hiſtory of the middle ages.

Where, but in monaſteries, ſays a female writer of ſplendid talents, 'could the precious remains of claſſical 'learning, and the divine monuments of ancient taſte, 'have been ſafely lodged amidſt the ravages of that age of 'ferocity and rapine, which ſucceeded the deſolation of

[70] See a Charge, delivered May 3, 1765, annexed to the end of vol. VII. of Jortin's Sermons, p. 353—377.

[71] Travels into Poland, Ruſſia, &c. 8vo. vol. III. p. 292.

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'the Roman empire, except in ſanctuaries like theſe, 'conſecrated by the ſuperſtition of the times beyond 'their intrinſic merit? The frequency of wars, and the 'licentious cruelty with which they were conducted, left 'neither the hamlet of the peaſant, nor the caſtle of the 'baron, free from depredation; but the church and mo-'naſtery generally remained inviolate.—Some of the bar-'barous nations were converted before their conqueſts, 'and moſt of them ſoon after their ſettlement in the coun-'tries they over-ran. Thoſe buildings, which their new 'faith taught them to venerate, afforded a ſhelter for thoſe 'valuable manuſcripts, which muſt otherwiſe have been 'deſtroyed in the common wreck. At the revival of 'learning they were produced from their dormitories.' It was in the monaſteries that moſt of the claſſics were diſ-covered; 'and to this it is owing, to the books and learn-'ing preſerved in theſe repoſitories, that we were not 'obliged to begin anew, and trace every art by ſlow and 'uncertain ſteps from its firſt origin. Science, already 'full grown and vigorous, awaked as from a trance, 'ſhook her pinions, and ſoon ſoared to the heights of 'knowledge.'

The monks, beſides being 'obliged by their rules to 'ſpend ſome ſtated hours every day in reading and ſtudy,' were 'almoſt the ſole inſtructors of youth. Towards the 'end of the 10th century there were no ſchools in Eu-'rope but the monaſteries, and thoſe which belonged to 'epiſcopal reſidences; nor any maſters but the Benedic-'tines.' The frequent intercourſe of the monks 'with 'Rome muſt have been peculiarly favourable to theſe 'Northern nations; as Italy for a long time led the way 'in every improvement of politeneſs or literature: and, 'if we imported their ſuperſtition, we likewiſe imported 'their manufactures, their knowledge, and their taſte.'

'Forbidding the vulgar tongue in the offices of devo-
'tion, and in reading the ſcriptures, though undoubtedly
'a great corruption in the Chriſtian church, was of infi-
'nite ſervice to the intereſts of learning. When the ec-
'cleſiaſtics had locked up their religion in a foreign
'tongue, they would take care not to loſe the key. This
'gave an importance to the learned languages; and every
'ſcholar could not only read, but wrote and diſputed in
'Latin, which without ſuch a motive would probably
'have been no more ſtudied than the Chineſe. And, at a
'time when the modern languages of Europe were yet
'unformed and barbarous, Latin was of great uſe as a kind
'of univerſal tongue, by which learned men might con-
'verſe and correſpond with each other.' In the preſent age, when learning is diffuſed through every rank, we can ſcarcely conceive, 'how totally all uſeful learning
'might have been loſt amongſt us, had it not been for an
'order of men, veſted with peculiar privileges, and pro-
'tected by even a ſuperſtitious degree of reverence[72].'
It muſt have been of ſervice alſo 'to the cauſe of liberty,
'to have a ſet of men, whoſe laws, privileges, and immu-
'nities the moſt daring kings were afraid to trample on;
'and this, before a more enlightened ſpirit of freedom
'had ariſen, might have its effect in preventing the ſtates

[72] Scarcely any of the laity, it is to be recollected, knew how to write. 'Materials for writing were alſo,' ſays Dr. Henry, 'very ſcarce and dear, 'which made few perſons think of learning that art.' Accordingly 'great eſtates were often transferred from one owner to another by a mere 'verbal agreement, and the delivery of earth and ſtone, before witneſſes, 'without any written deed. Parchment, in particular, on which all their 'books were written, was ſo difficult to be procured, that many of the 'MSS. of the middle ages, which are ſtill preſerved, appear to have been 'written on parchment from which ſome former writing had been eraſed.' Hiſt. of Great Britain, vol. IV. p. 81. Montfaucon, indeed, affirms, that from the greater part of the manuſcripts on parchment, which he had ſeen, ſome former treatiſe had been eraſed. See Jortin on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. IV. p. 250.

of

'of Chriſtendom from falling into ſuch entire ſlavery as 'the Aſiatics.'

'Let it be conſidered too, that when the minds of men 'began to open, ſome of the moſt eminent reformers 'ſprung from the boſom of the church, and even of the 'convent. It was not the laity who began to think. The 'eccleſiaſtics were the firſt to perceive the errors they had 'introduced. The church was reformed from within, 'not from without[73].'

The effects Chriſtianity has produced in the different countries of Europe, in the diffuſion of knowledge, may be illuſtrated by a recital of ſome of the beneficial alterations it created in our own iſland. They are taken from Dr. Henry, one of the moſt accurate and beſt informed of our Britiſh hiſtorians.

'The converſion of the Anglo-Saxons to Chriſtianity, 'in the courſe of the 7th century, contributed not a little 'to enlighten their minds, and promote the intereſt of 'learning.—Before that event, there was no ſuch thing 'as learning, nor any means of obtaining it, in that part 'of Britain which they inhabited.' Their ancient religion 'had a tendency to inſpire them with nothing but a brutal 'contempt of death, and a ſavage delight in war. As 'long, therefore, as they continued in the belief and 'practice of that wretched ſuperſtition, they ſeem to have 'been incapable either of ſcience or civility; but, by their 'converſion to Chriſtianity, they became acceſſible to 'both.' Beſides, 'ſuch of the firſt Anglo-Saxon con-'verts as deſigned to embrace the clerical profeſſion (of 'which there were many), were obliged to apply to ſome 'parts of learning, to qualify themſelves for that office; 'and it became neceſſary to provide ſchools for their in-'ſtruction. The truth of theſe obſervations is confirmed

[73] Miſcellaneous Pieces, in Proſe, by J. and A. L. Aikin, p. 91—118.

'by many unqueſtionable facts, which prove that the 'Engliſh began to pay ſome attention to learning (which 'they had before neglected), as ſoon as they were con-'verted to Chriſtianity[74]. The firſt Chriſtian king in 'England was the firſt Engliſh legiſlator who committed 'his laws to writing. Sigbert, king of the Eaſt-Angles, 'immediately after his converſion, founded a famous 'ſchool for the education of youth in his dominions, 'A. D. 630.—In a word, ſome of the Engliſh clergy, in 'the end of this and the next century, became famous for 'their learning, and were admired by all Europe as pro-'digies of erudition. So great and happy a change did 'the introduction of Chriſtianity, though not in its pureſt 'form, produce in the mental improvements of our an-'ceſtors.'

To deſcend to particulars, it may be added, that Theodore, who was a native of Tarſus in Cilicia, being advanced to the archbiſhopric of Canterbury A. D. 668, and being 'informed of the groſs and general ignorance 'of the' Engliſh, 'reſolved to promote the intereſt of uſe-'ful learning amongſt them, as the moſt effectual means 'of promoting that of true religion. With this view he 'brought with him from Rome a valuable collection of 'books, and ſeveral profeſſors of the ſciences, particularly 'abbot Adrian, to aſſiſt him in the education of the Eng-'liſh youth. This ſcheme, as we learn from Bede, was 'crowned with the greateſt ſucceſs. "Theſe two great "men (Theodore and Adrian), excelling in all parts of

[74] At a later period the converſion of the Normans produced ſimilar effects. 'The reception of Chriſtianity had,' ſays Moſheim, 'poliſhed and 'civilized, in an extraordinary manner, the rugged minds of the valiant 'Normans; for thoſe fierce warriors, who, under the darkneſs of pa-'ganiſm, had manifeſted the utmoſt averſion to all branches of knowledge 'and every kind of inſtruction, diſtinguiſhed themſelves, after their con-'verſion, by their ardent application to the ſtudy of religion and the pur-'ſuit of learning.' Eccl. Hiſt. vol. II. p. 249.

"ſacred

" ſacred and civil learning, collected a great multitude of " ſcholars, whom they daily inſtructed in the ſciences, " reading lectures to them on poetry, aſtronomy, and " arithmetic, as well as on divinity and the holy ſcrip- " tures[75]." And Dr. Henry, ſpeaking of a later period, ſays, 'there was a ſchool more or leſs famous in almoſt 'every convent. We may form ſome idea of the num- 'ber added to the ſchools of England by this means, if 'we conſider, that there were no fewer than 557 religious 'houſes of different kinds founded in it between the con- 'queſt and the death of king John.—In the ſchools of all 'the larger monaſteries, beſides the neceſſary parts of 'learning, ſeveral other ſciences were taught, as rhetoric, 'logic, theology, medicine, with the civil and canon law.' With reſpect to the period intervening between the year 1066 and 1216 the hiſtorian alſo ſays, 'though the circle 'of the ſciences was enlarged, and learning was cultivated 'with greater aſſiduity in this than in the former period; 'yet this was chiefly, or rather almoſt only, by the clergy.'

The erection of ſo many monaſteries in England 'may 'be reckoned among the cauſes of the revival of learning, 'by increaſing the number both of teachers and ſtudents, 'by multiplying the inducements to purſue, and the op- 'portunities to acquire, knowledge, but chiefly by mak- 'ing books much more common and attainable than they 'had been in any former period.—The government of 'theſe religious houſes was commonly beſtowed on men 'of learning; and, being attended with conſiderable de- 'grees of power and dignity, afforded ſtrong incentives 'to ſtudy. A library was then eſteemed ſo eſſential to a 'monaſtery, that it became a proverb, " A convent " without a library is like a caſtle without an armory." 'Some of theſe monaſtic libraries were very valuable.

[75] 'Bed. Hiſt. Eccles. L. 4. c. 2.'

'Though the abbey of Croyland was burnt only twenty-'five years after the conqueſt, its library then conſiſted of '900 volumes, of which 300 were very large. To pro-'vide books for the uſe of the church, and for furniſhing 'their libraries, there was in every monaſtery a room 'called the *Scriptorium*, or writing-chamber, in which 'ſeveral of the younger monks were conſtantly employed 'in tranſcribing books; and to which, in ſome monaſte-'ries, conſiderable revenues were appropriated. A noble 'Norman, who was a great encourager of learning, left 'his own library to that of the abbey of St. Albans, 'A. D. 1086, and granted two thirds of the tithes of Hat-'field, and certain tithes in Redburn, to ſupport the 'writers in the ſcriptorium of the abbey. Where there 'were no fixed revenues for defraying the expences of 'procuring books for the library, the abbot, with the con-'ſent of the chapter, commonly impoſed an annual tax 'on every member of the community for that purpoſe. 'The monks of ſome monaſteries, in this period, were 'bitterly reproached for the extravagant ſums they ex-'pended on their libraries[76].'

Thus it appears, that Chriſtianity, and the inſtitutions which aroſe out of it, have greatly contributed to the preſervation of knowledge, and to its ſubſequent diffuſion, throughout the whole of Europe, and in England in particular[77]. Nor will its progreſs in the latter country be

[76] Henry's Hiſt. of Great Britain, 8vo. vol. IV. p. 8—13; vol. VI. p. 118, 121, 164.

[77] Dr. Prieſtley, after obſerving, that 'religion has often operated 'powerfully in favour of the beſt intereſts of mankind, independently of, 'and in contradiction to, the views of the civil magiſtrate,' ſays, 'it is an 'obſervation of Mr. Hume's, that the precious ſparks of liberty were 'kindled and preſerved by the puritans in England, and that "it is to "this ſect, whoſe principles appear ſo frivolous, and whoſe habits ſo ri-"diculous, that the Engliſh owe the whole freedom of their conſtitution." Lect. on Hiſt. 4to. p. 436.

regarded

regarded as having been of ſmall conſequence to the cauſe of Civil Liberty. France in particular has been greatly benefited by the propagation of knowledge in England.

Thus in the eighth century it was under eſſential obligations to that enlightened Engliſhman, the abbot Alcuin, the favourite of Charlemagne. Cave, ſpeaking of him, ſays, 'for all the polite learning of which France 'boaſted in that and the following ages, ſhe is wholly in-'debted to him. The univerſities of Paris and Tours, of 'Fulden and Soiſſons, and many others, owe to him their 'origin and increaſe; with reſpect to which, if he did not 'perſonally preſide over them, or if he did not lay their 'foundations, he at leaſt enlightened them by his learn-'ing, directed them by his example, and enriched them 'by the benefits which he obtained for them from Char-'lemagne[78].'

That, for a conſiderable time previouſly to the æra of their revolution, the French imitated not only the manners, but aſſiduouſly ſtudied the writings, of the Engliſh, cannot be doubted. Nor could the peruſal of ſuch writings as thoſe of Harrington and Milton, Sydney and Locke, fail to produce a powerful effect in exciting a love of liberty, and a ſearching ſpirit of political inquiry, in the philoſophers of France; and, without the literary productions of the latter, the French revolution would not have been accompliſhed. The following is the ſtatement of Voltaire. With reſpect to England, the concluding part cannot but be thought too complimentary. The Italians, ſays he, 'are afraid to think; the French have 'thought but half-way; and the Engliſh, who have 'ſoared to heaven, becauſe their wings have not been 'clipped, are become the preceptors of the world. We

[78] Hiſtoria Literaria, ed. 1740, vol. I. p. 637.

' are

'are indebted to them for every thing, from the primitive 'laws of gravitation, the account of infinity, and the pre-'cise knowledge of light so vainly opposed, down to the 'new-invented plow, and the practice of inoculation, 'which are still subjects of controversy[79].'

The political principles, which were finally productive of the American revolution, were originally transplanted to the New world from the British soil. Now the mighty benefits, in favour of freedom, originating in the establishment of liberty on the North American continent, it is impossible to calculate. To the French revolution in particular it was eminently conducive; and it was so in two important respects. When the officers and the soldiers, who, on the other side of the Atlantic, had fought

[79] Translation of a piece of Voltaire's, published in the Grand Magazine. vol. II. p. 414. In a speech delivered in the year 1789, in the Patriotic Society of Dijon, M. Navier made the following declaration. 'Why should we be ashamed to acknowledge, that the Revolution, which 'is now establishing itself in our own country, is owing to the example 'given by England a century ago? It was from that day we became ac-'quainted with the political constitution of that island, and the prosperity 'with which it was accompanied; it was from that day our hatred of 'despotism derived its energy. In securing their own happiness, English-'men have prepared the way for that of the universe. Whilst, on all sides, 'tyrants were attempting to extinguish the sacred flame of liberty, our 'neighbours with intrepid watchfulness and care cherished it in their bo-'soms. We have caught some of these salutary sparks; and this fire, en-'flaming every mind, is extending itself over all Europe.' In their address to the Revolution Society of London, the members of *the Patriotic Union* of the city of Lisle have expressed similar sentiments. 'It must 'be owned, that in politics as in philosophy, you are the instructors and 'examples of the whole world. It is among you; yes, it is in your fa-'voured isle, that liberty, every where attacked, and trampled upon by 'despotism, has found a sacred asylum, and, if France should obtain that 'invaluable blessing, she will perhaps be more indebted for it to your 'nation than to herself; for, if we had not been encouraged by your ex-'ample and enlightened by your experience, we might yet perhaps have 'been unable to break our chains.' *Correspondence of the Revolution Society with the National Assembly*, &c. p. 14, 18.

successfully

ſucceſsfully in the land of inſurrection and under the banners of freedom, returned to their own country and to the boſom of their families, they failed not to kindle ſome of that political zeal, and to circulate ſome of thoſe important truths, which they had imbibed during their abode in the other hemiſphere. When, from the expences of the war entered into by the French government, in ſupport of American independence, the national debt of France was ſwelled to an exorbitant height; when, in conſequence of this ill-judged interference, the proviſion for its payment baffled the efforts of miniſterial ingenuity, and tranſcended the limits of ordinary rapacity; the monarch and his miniſters were under the mortifying neceſſity of ſucceſſively ſummoning the aſſembly of the *Notables* and of the States-General of the kingdom; and thus a flame was involuntarily lighted up by them in France, which all their ſubſequent exertions were unable to ſmother and to ſuppreſs, and which has remained unextinguiſhed, notwithſtanding the perſevering hoſtilities of ſo large a proportion of the prieſts, the princes, the placemen, and the ſoldiers, of Europe.

After introducing ſo many remarks on the utility of the monaſteries of the Weſt in a literary view; it is proper for me to acknowledge, in juſtice to the Greek exiles of Conſtantinople, that, in the 15th century, they were very conſpicuous inſtruments in the revival of letters. But theſe refugees were themſelves greatly indebted for the portion of knowledge which they poſſeſſed to the Grecian and Oriental monaſteries, the repoſitories of ancient literature. After 'the extinction of the ſchools of Alexandria and Athens, the ſtudies of the Greeks,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'inſenſibly retired to ſome regular monaſteries, and above all to the royal college of Conſtantinople.' But, in the reign of Leo the Iſaurian, the library, belonging to that college, containing more than 36,000 volumes,

86,000 volumes, was deſtroyed by fire; the college itſelf was aboliſhed; 'and a ſavage ignorance and contempt of 'letters—diſgraced the princes of the Heraclean and Iſau-'rian dynaſties[80],' It may be added, that the library of the Greek emperors, which was afterwards collected, was ſecured by Mahomet the IId, when he obtained poſſeſſion of the capital of the Byzantine monarchy, and that it was deſtroyed, according to Dr. Jortin, by Amurath the IVth, as late as the ſeventeenth century[81]. But though the two royal libraries of Conſtantinople were devoted to deſtruction, there is reaſon to believe, that thoſe of the Oriental monks were ſeldom violated by their Turkiſh maſters. And this was a circumſtance not a little favourable to literature.

Of the attempts made in the Eaſtern world to obtain the loſt works of the ancients, one effort was attended with ſuch ſplendid ſucceſs, as to merit particular mention. Janus Laſcaris, the active miſſionary of Lorenzo de Medicis, ſailed to Conſtantinople and the Eaſt in ſearch of ancient manuſcripts; and, having the good fortune to be aſſiſted in his reſearches by ſultan Bajazet the IId, he returned to Italy with a cargo of 200 manuſcripts, 80 of which were before unknown to Europe. This treaſure, we are informed by Aldus, as quoted in a note by Mr. Gibbon, was found in Thrace, upon Mount Athos[82]. That

[80] Gibbon, vol. X. p. 156.

[81] Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. IV. p. 493.

[82] Gibbon, vol. XII. p. 136. To the monks of Mount Athos Ruſſia alſo is indebted for the richeſt of its literary treaſures. In the library of the Holy Synod at Moſcow, we are informed by Mr. Coxe, there are 502 Greek manuſcripts, of which the greater part were collected from one of the monaſteries of Mount Athos, by the monk Arſenius, and at the ſuggeſtion of that eminent promoter of Ruſſian literature, the patriarch Nicon. Beſides ſeveral important manuſcripts of the Septuagint and the New Teſtament, there are in this collection valuable manuſcripts of Homer

That they were diſcovered in ſome of the monaſteries, which are ſo thickly ſcattered in the receſſes of that mountain [83], cannot be doubted. Perhaps, then, the cauſe of literature is as much indebted to the monaſteries of the Eaſt, as to thoſe of the Weſtern world.

It has already been obſerved in an extract, that of thoſe who reformed the church ſome of the moſt eminent belonged to it. This, indeed, was the fact with reſpect to *all* the moſt celebrated of the reformers, unleſs perhaps Melanchthon be excepted. Switzerland produced Zuinglius; Bohemia, John Huſs; Germany, Bucer, Oecolampadius, and Luther; France, Calvin and Beza; Italy, Savanarola and Peter Martyr; Holland, Eraſmus; Scotland, John Knox [84]; and England, Wickliffe, Latimer, Ridley, and Cranmer. Now all theſe had been eccleſiaſtics in the church of Rome. To a large proportion of the moſt diſtinguiſhed authors of the revival of letters the ſame obſervation may be extended. In the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries appeared the following eminent reſtorers of learning and promoters of knowledge; and they were all eccleſiaſtics, either during the whole or during a part of their lives. The Greek empire produced Theodore Gaza and cardinal Beſſarion; Ireland, archbiſhop

Homer and Heſiod, of Æſchylus and Sephocles, of Demoſthenes and Æſchines, of Plutarch, Pauſanias, and Strabo. It was not till the year 1780, that an accurate catalogue of theſe manuſcripts was publiſhed at Peterſburgh. Travels into Poland, Ruſſia, &c. 8vo. vol. II. p. 50—54.

[83] In his paſſage over Mount Athos, which entirely belongs to the Monks, and on that account is called *the Holy Mountain* both by the Greeks and the Turks, Dr. Pococke viſited no leſs than nineteen monaſteries. *Deſcript. of the Eaſt*, fol. vol. II. part II. p. 144.

[84] The earl of Buchan, ſpeaking of Knox's contemporary and countryman George Buchanan, ſays, he was 'the father of that ſyſtem, which 'will one day verify the prophecies of the Chriſtian ſcriptures, to the 'abaſement of kings, and the deſtruction of prieſtcraft.' *Eſſays on the Lives and Writings of Fletcher of Saltoun and the Poet Thomſon*, p. 33.

Uſher;

Uſher; England, Grocyn, Linacer, cardinal Wolſey, and dean Colet; Holland, Eraſmus[85]; Spain, Arias Montanus, Mariana, and cardinal Ximenes; Denmark, Tycho Brahe; Germany, Copernicus; France, Vatablus, Thuanus, Mark Anthony Muretus, and Peireſc; and Italy gave birth to Petrarch, Barlaam, Boccace, Hermolaus Barbaro, John of Ravenna, Laurentius Valla, Sadolet, Hieronymus Vida, Poggius, Angelo Politian, Father Paul, Sixtus the IVth, and Leo the Xth. But Nicholas the Vth deſerves to be ſeparately noticed. As a patron of learning, he ſtands perhaps unrivalled[86]. 'The fame of Nicholas the fifth has not,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'been adequate to his merits. From a plebeian 'origin, he raiſed himſelf by his virtue and learning: the 'character of the man prevailed over the intereſt of the 'pope; and he ſharpened thoſe weapons which were 'ſoon pointed againſt the Roman church. He had been 'the friend of the moſt eminent ſcholars of the age: he 'became their patron.—The influence of the holy ſee per-'vaded Chriſtendom; and he exerted that influence in the 'ſearch, not of benefices, but of books. From the ruins of 'the Byzantine libraries, from the darkeſt monaſteries of 'Germany and Britain, he collected the duſty manu-'ſcripts of the writers of antiquity; and wherever the 'original could not be removed, a faithful copy was 'tranſcribed and tranſmitted for his uſe. The Vatican,

[85] After having obſerved, that 'the protection and encouragement the 'Clergy afforded to the exiled Greeks' was one of the chief cauſes, which produced the revival of learning; Warburton, ſpeaking of the promotion of learning, ſays, there was one among the Clergy in particular, meaning Eraſmus, who did 'more in this ſervice than all the Laity of that age 'together.' Warburton's Works, vol. V. p. 198.

[86] Lord Bolingbroke, ſpeaking of Nicholas V and other pontiffs, ſays, 'the popes proved worſe politicians than the mufties.—The magicians 'themſelves broke the charm, by which they had bound mankind for ſo 'many ages.' Let. on Hiſt. 1752, vol. I. p. 206.

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'the old repoſitory for bulls and legends, for ſuper-
'ſtition and forgery, was daily repleniſhed with more
'precious furniture; and ſuch was the induſtry of Ni-
'cholas, that in a reign of eight years he formed a library
'of five thouſand volumes. To his munificence, the
'Latin world was indebted for the verſions of Xenophon,
'Diodorus, Polybius, Thucydides, Herodotus, and Ap-
'pian; of Strabo's geography, of the Iliad, of the moſt
'valuable works of Plato and Ariſtotle, of Ptolemy and
'Theophraſtus, and of the fathers of the Greek church[87].'
That the ſtudy of the claſſics has been eminently favourable to freedom, cannot be doubted.

'Before the revival of claſſic literature, the barbarians
'in Europe were,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'immerſed in igno-
'rance; and their vulgar tongues were marked with the
'rudeneſs and poverty of their manners. The ſtudents
'of the more perfect idioms of Rome and Greece were
'introduced to a new world of light and ſcience; to the
'ſociety of the free and poliſhed nations of antiquity; and
'to a familiar converſe with thoſe immortal men, who
'ſpoke the ſublime language of eloquence and reaſon.
'Such an intercourſe muſt tend to refine the taſte, and to
'elevate the genius, of the moderns.' For a time, however, it produced only a race of imitators. 'But, as ſoon
'as it had been deeply ſaturated with the celeſtial dew,
'the ſoil was quickened into vegetation and life; the mo-
'dern idioms were refined: the claſſics of Athens and
'Rome inſpired a pure taſte and a generous emulation;
'and in Italy, as afterwards in France and England, the
'pleaſing reign of poetry and fiction was ſucceeded by
'the light of ſpeculative and experimental philoſophy.
'Genius may anticipate the ſeaſon of maturity; but in
'the education of a people, as in that of an individual,
'memory muſt be exerciſed, before the powers of reaſon
'and fancy can be expanded; nor may the artiſt hope to

'equal

'equal or ſurpaſs, till he has learned to imitate, the works 'of his predeceſſors [88],'

After obſerving, that the writings of the moſt celebrated phyſicians, philoſophers, and mathematicians of Greece were tranſlated by the Arabs, and ſtudied by them with ardor; but that 'there is no example of a poet, 'an orator, or even an hiſtorian, being taught to ſpeak 'the language of the Saracens;' Mr. Gibbon ſays, 'The 'philoſophers of Athens and Rome enjoyed the bleſſings, 'and aſſerted the rights, of civil and religious freedom. 'Their moral and political writings might have gradually 'unlocked the fetters of Eaſtern deſpotiſm [89], diffuſed a 'liberal ſpirit of inquiry and toleration, and encouraged 'the Arabian ſages to ſuſpect, that their caliph was a ty-'rant, and their prophet an impoſtor [90].'

But it is proper to notice an objection againſt Chriſtianity. To the ſpread of the religion of Jeſus the decline of learning has in a great degree been imputed; and the following ſtatement, it is probable, will appear to many to contain a formidable objection to the beneficial influence which has been aſcribed to it. At the æra of the promulgation of Chriſtianity, arts, ſcience, and literature flouriſhed: as ſoon as it was embraced by a great majority of the inhabitants of the Roman world, they

[87] Vol. XII. p. 134. [88] Vol. XII. p. 138.

[89] Hobbes, in enumerating the cauſes which excited ſuch a determined ſpirit of oppoſition againſt Charles I. ſays, 'there were an exceeding great 'number of men of the better ſort, that had been ſo educated, as that in 'their youth, having read the books written by famous men of the an-'cient Grecian and Roman Common-wealths, concerning their polity and 'great actions; in which books the popular government was extolled by 'that glorious name of liberty, and monarchy diſgraced by the name of 'tyranny, they became thereby in love with their forms of government.' *Behemoth, the Hiſt. of the Cauſes of the Civil Wars of England*, 1682, *p.* 5.

[90] Vol. X. p. 51. 'The age of Arabian learning continued about 500 'years, till the great eruption of the Moguls.' p. 44.

drooped

drooped and declined. But the fact is, that the great cauſes which produced *the decline* of learning were entirely unconnected with the propagation of our religion; and there is a known cauſe, totally independent of Chriſtianity, to which we may juſtly attribute the danger it afterwards experienced of total *extinction*, namely, the irruption of the barbarous nations.

As this objection is not deſtitute of plauſibility, and is ſo injurious to Chriſtianity, ſome extracts ſhall be introduced of a conſiderable length, which contain a reply to it.

Chriſtianity, depreſſed and perſecuted in the three firſt centuries, and the beginning of the fourth, *cannot* be ſuppoſed, at that time, to have had much influence in checking the attainment of uſeful knowledge, and the proſecution of ſcientific purſuits, among the learned Pagans, or to have accelerated among them the decay of the arts and the decline of taſte. Now an appeal to authentic hiſtory, and an examination of the writers of the time, will inform us, as a matter which admits not of the ſmalleſt diſpute, that the arts and literature and public taſte were all greatly on the decline, antecedently to the toleration of Chriſtianity; and that the fatal cauſes were already begun powerfully to operate, which were deſtined to ſubvert the Roman empire, and to open a way for the admiſſion of the ſavage conquerors of Scandinavia and Scythia, and for the conſequent eſtabliſhment of ignorance and barbariſm.

The immortal writers of Greece and Rome, it ſhould be remembered, had been educated, either under the free ſpirit of Republican governments, or *a ſhort time after the overthrow of liberty*, when the maxims and the inſtitutions, when the freedom of inquiry and the ardour of curioſity, which it had created, ſtill continued to ſubſiſt, and were productive of the happieſt effects.

The following quotations, at the ſame time that they diſprove the forecited objection, will diſcloſe both the radical and the immediate cauſes of the decline and diſſolution of the Roman empire, one of the moſt intereſting objects of hiſtoric reſearch. I have, alſo, been the leſs diſpoſed to curtail them, becauſe they diſplay, with the greateſt ſtrength of evidence, the mighty evils which inevitably flow from deſpotiſm, whatever be the perſonal character of the prince who is inveſted with government.

The reign of Trajan commenced A. D. 98: that of the younger Antonine ended A. D. 180. In deſcribing their reigns, and thoſe of the intervening princes, Hadrian and the elder Antonine, Mr. Gibbon ſays, 'it was ſcarcely 'poſſible that the eyes of contemporaries ſhould diſcover 'in the public felicity the latent cauſes of decay and cor-'ruption.' The 'long peace, and the uniform govern-'ment of the Romans, introduced a ſlow and ſecret poi-'ſon into the vitals of the empire. The minds of men 'were gradually reduced to the ſame level, the fire of ge-'nius was extinguiſhed, and even the military ſpirit eva-'porated.—The moſt liberal rewards ſought out the fainteſt 'glimmerings of literary merit.' Yet, 'if we except the 'inimitable Lucian, an age of indolence paſſed away 'without producing a ſingle writer of genius who de-'ſerved the attention of poſterity.—The beauties of the 'poets and orators, inſtead of kindling a fire like their 'own, inſpired only cold and ſervile imitations: or, if 'any ventured to deviate from thoſe models, they de-'viated at the ſame time from good ſenſe and propriety. 'The name of poet was almoſt forgotten; that of orator 'was uſurped by the ſophiſts. A cloud of critics, of com-'pilers, of commentators, darkened the face of learning, 'and the decline of genius was ſoon followed by the cor-'ruption of taſte.'

Seventeen

Seventeen years after the death of the younger Antonine, Severus was acknowledged emperor of the Roman world. 'By gratitude, by miſguided policy, by ſeeming 'neceſſity, Severus was induced to relax the nerves of diſ-'cipline. The vanity of his ſoldiers was flattered with 'the honour of wearing gold rings; their eaſe indulged in 'the permiſſion of living with their wives in the idleneſs 'of quarters. He increaſed their pay beyond the example 'of former times, and taught them to expect, and ſoon 'to claim, extraordinary donatives on every public occa-'ſion of danger or feſtivity. Elated by ſucceſs, ener-'vated by luxury, and raiſed above the level of ſubjects 'by their dangerous privileges, they ſoon became inca-'pable of military fatigue, oppreſſive to the country, and 'impatient of a juſt ſubordination.—Poſterity, who ex-'perienced the fatal effects of his maxims and example, 'juſtly conſidered' Severus 'as the principal author of 'the decline of the Roman empire.'

In delineating the adminiſtration of Caracalla, the ſon of Severus, the hiſtorian ſays, the ſucceſſive augmentations of the pay of the ſoldiers 'ruined the empire, for 'with the ſoldier's pay their numbers too were increaſed. '—As long as Rome and Italy were reſpected as the cen-'ter of government, a national ſpirit was preſerved by 'the ancient, and inſenſibly imbibed by the adopted, 'citizens. The principal commands of the army were 'filled by men, who had received a liberal education, 'were well inſtructed in the advantages of laws and let-'ters, and who had riſen, by equal ſteps, through the 'regular ſucceſſion of civil and military honours. To 'their influence and example we may partly aſcribe the 'modeſt obedience of the legions during the two firſt 'centuries of the imperial hiſtory. But, when the laſt 'enclofure of the Roman conſtitution was trampled down 'by Caracalla,—the rougher trade of arms was abandoned

'to the peaſants and barbarians of the frontiers, who 'knew no country but their camp, no ſcience but that 'of war, no civil laws, and ſcarcely thoſe of military 'diſcipline. With bloody hands, ſavage manners, and 'deſperate reſolutions, they ſometimes guarded, but much 'oftener ſubverted, the throne of the emperors.'

'The laſt three hundred years,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, he is ſpeaking of the year 248, 'had been conſumed in appa-'rent proſperity and internal decline. The nation of 'ſoldiers, magiſtrates, and legiſlators, who compoſed the 'thirty-five tribes of the Roman people, was diſſolved 'into the common maſs of mankind, and confounded 'with the millions of ſervile provincials, who had re-'ceived the name, without adopting the ſpirit, of Ro-'mans.—To the undiſcerning eye of the vulgar, Philip 'appeared a monarch no leſs powerful than Hadrian or 'Auguſtus had formerly been. The form was ſtill the 'ſame, but the animating health and vigour were fled. 'The induſtry of the people was diſcouraged and ex-'hauſted by a long ſeries of oppreſſion. The diſcipline 'of the legions, which alone; after the extinction of every 'other virtue, had propped the greatneſs of the ſtate, was 'corrupted by the ambition, or relaxed by the weakneſs, 'of the emperors. The ſtrength of the frontiers, which 'had always conſiſted in arms rather than in fortifica-'tions, was inſenſibly undermined; and the faireſt pro-'vinces were left expoſed to the rapaciouſneſs or ambi-'tion of the Barbarians, who ſoon diſcovered the de-'cline of the Roman empire,'

Such was the ſtate of the empire in the year 248, when the great ſecular games were ſolemnized by Philip. But far worſe was the ſituation into which it was plunged immediately ſubſequent to that year. From this celebration of the ſecular games, ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'to the death of 'the emperor Gallienus, there elapſed twenty years of

'ſhame

'ſhame and misfortune. During that calamitous period,
'every inſtant of time was marked, every province of
'the Roman world was afflicted, by barbarous invaders
'and military tyrants, and the ruined empire ſeemed to
'approach the laſt and fatal moment of its diſſolution.'
The diſtracted reign of Gallienus produced no leſs than nineteen pretenders to the throne. 'The election of theſe
'precarious emperors, their power and their death, were
'equally deſtructive to their ſubjects and adherents. The
'price of their fatal elevation was inſtantly diſcharged to
'the troops, by an immenſe donative, drawn from the
'bowels of the exhauſted people. However virtuous was
'their character, however pure their intentions, they
'found themſelves reduced to the hard neceſſity of ſup-
'porting their uſurpation by frequent acts of rapine and
'cruelty. When they fell, they involved armies and pro-
'vinces in their fall.' The braveſt uſurpers alſo 'were
'compelled by the perplexity of their ſituation, to con-
'clude ignominious treaties with the common enemy, to
'purchaſe with oppreſſive tributes the neutrality or ſer-
'vices of the Barbarians, and to introduce hoſtile and in-
'dependent nations into the heart of the Roman mo-
'narchy.'

'It is almoſt unneceſſary to add,' ſays Mr. Gibbon, ſpeaking of a ſomewhat later period, of the æra of the abdication of Diocleſian, 'that the civil diſtractions of
'the empire, the licence of the ſoldiers, the inroads of the
'Barbarians, and the progreſs of deſpotiſm, had proved
'very unfavourable to genius and even to learning. The
'ſucceſſion of Illyrian princes reſtored the empire, with-
'out reſtoring the ſciences.—The voice of poetry was ſi-
'lent. Hiſtory was reduced to dry and confuſed abridg-
'ments, alike deſtitue of amuſement and inſtruction. A
'lanquid and affected eloquence was ſtill retained in the
'pay and ſervice of the emperors, who encouraged not

'any arts, except thoſe which contributed to the gratifi-
'cation of their pride, or the defence of their power.'

That the fine arts were in a fallen ſtate during the reign of Dioclefian, and at the elevation of Conſtantine, the following obſervations will prove. Mr. Gibbon, ſpeaking of the magnificent palace of the former of thoſe princes, ſays, we are informed, by a 'recent and very 'judicious traveller[91], that the awful ruins of Spalatro 'are not leſs expreſſive of the decline of the arts, than 'of the greatneſs of the Roman empire, in the time of 'Dioclefian.' And the triumphal arch of Conſtantine, raiſed on account of the victory which he gained over Maxentius in the year 312, 'ſtill remains a melancholy 'proof of the decline of the arts, and a ſingular teſtimony 'of the meaneſt vanity. As it was not poſſible to find 'in the capital of the empire a ſculptor, who was ca-'pable of adorning that public monument; the arch of 'Trajan, without any reſpect either for his memory or 'for the rules of propriety, was ſtripped of its moſt ele-'gant figures.—The new ornaments, which it was ne-'ceſſary to introduce between the vacancies of ancient 'ſculpture, are executed in the rudeſt and moſt unſkilful 'manner[92].'

There is alſo another cauſe, not yet alluded to, but perhaps deſerving of notice, which diſcouraged the purſuit of knowledge, and promoted the deſtruction of books. 'About the beginning of the ſecond century,' ſays Dr. Enfield, 'aſtrologers, Chaldeans, and other 'diviners, diſgraced the profeſſion of philoſophy by aſ-'ſuming the title of mathematicians. By this name they 'were commonly known, and this ſignification of the 'term was in general uſe for ſeveral centuries. In

[91] The Abate Fortis *(Viaggio in Dalmazia)*.

[92] Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. 8vo. vol. I. p. 90, 198, 203, 221, 268, 303, 84, 445, 449, 451; vol. II. p. 181, 234.

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'the Juſtinian code we find a chapter under this title, 'De *Maleficis et Mathematicis*, "On Sorcerers and "Mathematicians;" and one book of the Theodoſian 'code preſcribes the baniſhment of mathematicians out 'of Rome, and all the Roman cities, and the burning of 'their books. Impoſtors, who paſſed under this appel-'lation, rendered themſelves exceedingly obnoxious to 'princes and ſtateſmen by the influence which their 'arts gave them over the minds of the vulgar; and it was 'thought neceſſary, for the ſafety of the ſtate, to ſubject 'them to rigorous penalties[93].'

Thoſe frivolous ſtudies, and thoſe perplexing inquiries, in which ſuch multitudes engaged during the fourth and ſo many ſucceeding centuries, have been falſely attributed to the genius of Chriſtianity and to the New Teſtament. But it holds out no encouragement to the proſecution of ſuch queſtions. Accordingly they may fairly be attributed to that decline of learning, and that prevalence of falſe taſte, which have, in a conſiderable degree, been accounted for in the preceding extracts; and a very large proportion of thoſe fruitleſs diſputations and intricate ſubtelties, which occaſioned ſo great a waſte of time and intellect, did immediately reſult from the faſhionable treatiſes on logic and metaphyſics, and particularly from the peruſal of Plato and Ariſtotle, and the numerous commentators written upon them in the Greek, the Latin, and the Arabic tongues. As theologians were almoſt the only perſons who applied to letters, of courſe it was from theology that *many* of their ſpeculations were derived. To have prevented this, a perpetual miracle muſt, indeed, have been exerted; and, if Chriſtianity had not exiſted, an infinite number of idle diſquiſitions would have been deduced from the writings, whatever they

[93] Hiſt. of Philoſophy, vol. II. p. 328.

might be, in which the reigning religion was depoſited[94].

It was not to the religion of Jeſus that the fondneſs for obſtruſe ſpeculations owed its growth. It was the fault of the times. It operated upon men of every ſentiment. For ſome time antecedent to the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, it was carried to a greater height in the ſchools of the philoſophers than among the fathers of the church. 'The declining age of learning and of mankind is marked,' ſays Mr. Gibbon (he is ſpeaking of the period which preceded the abdication of Diocleſian), 'by the riſe and rapid progreſs of the new Platonicians. 'The ſchool of Alexandria ſilenced thoſe of Athens; 'and the ancient ſects enrolled themſelves under the banners of the more faſhionable teachers, who recommended their ſyſtem by the novelty of their method 'and the auſterity of their manners. Several of theſe 'maſters, Ammonius, Plotinus, Amelius, and Porphyry, 'were men of profound thought and intenſe application; 'but, by miſtaking the true object of philoſophy, their 'labours contributed much leſs to improve, than to corrupt, the human underſtanding. The knowledge that 'is ſuited to our ſituation and powers, the whole compaſs of moral, natural, and mathematical ſcience, was 'neglected by the new Platonicians: whilſt they exhauſted their ſtrength in the verbal diſputes of metaphyſics, attempted to explore the ſecrets of the inviſible world, and ſtudied to reconcile Ariſtotle with Plato, 'on ſubjects of which both theſe philoſophers were as 'ignorant as the reſt of mankind[95].' The minds of the philoſophers of this and of a ſomewhat later period

[94] 'The Muſulmans,' ſays Volney, enumerate 'ſeventy-two ſects; but 'I read, while I reſided among them, a work which gave an account of 'more than eighty.' Volney's *Ruins; or a Survey of the Revolutions of Empires*, p. 343.

[95] Vol. II. p. 182.

were

were likewiſe darkened by the illuſions of fanaticiſm[96]. They abuſed, ſays Mr. Gibbon, 'the ſuperſtitious credulity of mankind;' and the Grecian myſteries were 'ſupported by the magic or theurgy of the modern Platoniſts. They arrogantly pretended to controul the 'order of nature, to explore the ſecrets of futurity, to 'command the ſervice of the inferior dæmons, to enjoy 'the view and converſation of the ſuperior Gods, and, 'by diſengaging the ſoul from her material bands, to re-'unite that immortal particle with the Infinite and Divine 'mind[97].'

As barbariſm advanced, and the knowledge of almoſt all the illuſtrious writers of antiquity was gradually loſt, the pretended votaries of philoſophy were more and more benighted in the clouds of metaphyſics[98], and purſued its fleeting ſhadows with growing eagerneſs. 'The ge-'neral prevalence of this taſte for ſubtle ſpeculations, 'among the Scholaſtics, is,' ſays Dr. Enfield, 'certainly 'to be accounted for, chiefly from the want of more im-'portant objects to occupy the leiſure of monaſtic life, 'and to furniſh occaſions of generous and uſeful emu-'lation among thoſe who devoted their days to ſtudy. 'But the particular direction which this idle humour 'took was owing to the univerſal authority, which, after 'Auguſtine, Ariſtotle—by degrees acquired in the Chriſ-'tian ſchools. The reverence, almoſt religious, which the 'Scholaſtics paid to the Stagyrite, naturally led them to

[96] See Dr. Enfield's Hiſt. of Philoſophy, vol. II. p. 63—101.

[97] Vol. IV. p. 74.

[98] The metaphyſical diſputants of the middle ages, it may, however, be obſerved, ſurpaſſed not the Pagan Platoniſts in obſcurity. Dr. Prieſtley, indeed, ſpeaking of them, and particularly of Proclus, Plotinus, and Jamblichus, ſays, 'the writings of the ſchoolmen, which have been ſo 'much ridiculed, on account of their obſcurity, and idle diſtinctions, are 'day-light compared to thoſe of theſe Platoniſts.' Hiſt. of the Early Opinions concerning Jeſus Chriſt, vol. I. p. 399.

'follow

'follow implicitly his method of philoſophiſing, and to 'embrace his opinions, as far as they were able to diſcover 'them. "There are," ſays Vives, "both philoſophers "and divines, who not only ſay, that Ariſtotle reached "the utmoſt boundaries of ſcience, but that his ſyllo- "giſtic method of reaſoning is the moſt direct and cer- "tain path to knowledge; a preſumption, which has led "us to receive, upon the authority of Ariſtotle, many "tenets as fully known and eſtabliſhed, which are by "no means ſuch; for why ſhould we fatigue ourſelves "with farther inquiry, when it is agreed that nothing "can be diſcovered beyond what may be found in his "writings. Hence has ſprung up in the mind of man "an incredible degree of indolence; ſo that every one "thinks it ſafeſt and moſt pleaſant to ſee with another's "eyes, and believe with another's faith, and to examine "nothing for himſelf." There cannot be a clearer proof 'of the extravagant heighth to which this Αριστελομανια, 'rage for Ariſtotle, was carried, than the fact complained 'of by Melancthon, that in ſacred aſſemblies the ethics of 'Ariſtotle were read to the people inſtead of the goſpel[99].'

From theſe facts and theſe obſervations it does, then, appear, that the decline of knowledge, and the progreſs of a vitiated taſte, are to be aſcribed to cauſes, altogether different from the publication and the ſpread of Chriſtianity.

It has been aſſerted, that this religion, by rendering men more virtuous and benevolent than they otherwiſe would have been, has at the ſame time prepared their minds, for making ſubſtantial ſacrifices in behalf of mankind, and for feeling a fixed deteſtation of every ſyſtem of political oppreſſion and injuſtice. A few extracts and remarks, relative to the influence it has had upon morals, ſhall, therefore, be introduced.

[99] Hiſt. of Philoſophy, vol. II. p. 389.

That

That Chriſtianity, at the æra of its promulgation, produced the moſt excellent effects on the lives of its profeſſors, that it altered, greatly and beyond all former example, the characters of millions, and that it occaſioned the growth of the moſt permanent and moſt exalted virtues, every man, who has ſtudied the early part of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, is perfectly apprized[100]. On this point there is no controverſy. But, in each following age, the religion of Jeſus, being united by a forced alliance to the ſtate, and, from the thirſt of gain, the luſt of power, and the prevalence of fanaticiſm, being groſsly perverted in its doctrines and its precepts; it has, as might be expected, under theſe circumſtances, had its energies enfeebled; and has not produced thoſe extenſive and magnificent revolutions in the moral world,

[100] Chriſt's diſciples, ſays a learned inquirer into eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, 'were examples of fervent zeal for the welfare of mankind, of an inoffenſive behaviour, of diſintereſtedneſs and ſelf-denial, of indefatigable induſtry, of the moſt extenſive charity, of patience and courage and conſtancy, and of a regular practice of all that they taught. The firſt Chriſtians reſembled their teachers in theſe good qualities, and it was no ſmall advantage to them in their apologies for themſelves and their religion to be able to appeal boldly to their innocence and integrity. That we may have a right ſenſe of this, we ſhould conſider what it was to be a Chriſtian in thoſe days, leſt we be deceived by the vulgar uſe of the word, and by the notion which we at preſent entertain about it. To be a Chriſtian at that time was to be an example of well-tried virtue, of true wiſdom, and of conſummate fortitude; for he ſurely deſerves the name of a great and a good man, who ſerves God, and is a friend to mankind, and receives the moſt ungrateful returns from the world, and endures them with a calm and compoſed mind, who dares look ſcorn and infamy and death in the face, who can ſtand forth unmoved and patiently bear to be derided as a fool and an ideot, to be pointed out for a madman and an enthuſiaſt, to be reviled as an atheiſt and an enemy to all righteouſneſs, to be puniſhed as a robber and a murderer. He who can paſs through theſe trials is a conqueror indeed, and what the world calls courage ſcarce deſerves that name, when compared to this behaviour.' Jortin's Diſc. on the Tr. of the Chr. Rel. p. 113.

which

which ſeemed to have been promiſed and enſured by the ſtrength of its proofs, the clearneſs of its laws, and the weight of its ſanctions. But, depreſſed and diſguiſed as it has been, deſtitute till the 15th century of the important aid it would have derived from the art of printing, and for a long time locked up in an unknown tongue, it has, under all this opprobrium and under all theſe diſadvantages, had a very powerful effect in promoting purity of heart and rectitude of conduct.

'Chriſtianity,' ſays archdeacon Paley, 'in every country in which it is profeſſed, hath obtained a ſenſible, 'although not a complete influence, upon the public 'judgment of morals. And this is very important. For, 'without the occaſional correction which public opinion 'receives, by referring to ſome fixed ſtandard of morality, 'no man can foretell into what extravagancies it might 'wander.—In this way, it is poſſible, that many may be 'kept in order by Chriſtianity, who are not themſelves 'Chriſtians. They may be guided by the rectitude 'which it communicates to public opinion. Their con'ſciences may ſuggeſt their duty truly, and they may aſ'cribe theſe ſuggeſtions to a moral ſenſe, or to the native 'capacity of the human intellect, when in fact they are 'nothing more, than the public opinion reflected from 'their own minds; an opinion, in a conſiderable degree, 'modified by the leſſons of Chriſtianity.'

The influence of this religion 'muſt be perceived, if 'perceived at all, in the ſilent courſe of private and do'meſtic life. Nay more; even *there* its influence may 'not be very obvious to obſervation. If it check, in 'ſome degree, perſonal diſſoluteneſs, if it beget a general 'probity in the tranſaction of buſineſs, if it produce ſoft 'and humane manners in the maſs of the community and 'occaſional exertions of laborious or expenſive benevo'lence in a few individuals, it is all the effect which can

'offer

'offer itſelf to external notice. The kingdom of heaven 'is within us. That which is the ſubſtance of the re- 'ligion, its hopes and conſolations, its intermixture with 'the thoughts by day and by night, the devotion of the 'heart, the controul of appetite, the ſteady direction of 'the will to the commands of God, is neceſſary inviſible. 'Yet upon theſe depend the virtue and the happineſs of 'millions. This cauſe renders the repreſentations of 'hiſtory, with reſpect to religion, defective and falla- 'cious, in a greater degree than they are upon any other 'ſubject. Religion operates moſt upon thoſe of whom 'hiſtory knows the leaſt; upon fathers and mothers in 'their families, upon men ſervants and maid ſervants, 'upon the orderly tradeſman, the quiet villager, the 'manufacturer at his loom, the huſbandman in his fields. 'Amongſt ſuch its influence collectively may be of ineſ- 'timable value, yet its effects in the mean time little upon 'thoſe, who figure upon the ſtage of the world. *They* 'may know nothing of it; they may believe nothing of 'it; they may be actuated by motives more impetuous 'than thoſe which religion is able to excite. It cannot, 'therefore, be thought ſtrange, that this influence ſhould 'elude the graſp and touch of public hiſtory; for what 'is public hiſtory, but a regiſter of the ſucceſſes and diſ- 'appointments, the vices, the follies, and the quarrels, of 'thoſe who engage in contentions for power[101]?'

After quoting this paſſage, I would briefly obſerve, that the obſervations, contained in the three laſt ſentences of the archdeacon, are perfectly true with reſpect to the ordinary tranſactions regiſtered in hiſtoric annals, but apply not to a great national revolution, undertaken againſt civil tyranny, and in vindication of the rights of man. In the accompliſhment of ſuch an event, the principles of

[101] Evid of Chr. 2 ed. vol. II. p. 376, 382.

Chriſtianity

Chriſtianity cannot but operate, though they may, indeed, ſecretly operate. For by whom is ſuch a revolution effected? Not by mere men of ambition; not by that claſs of perſons, who commonly figure upon the ſtage of the world; not by the venality of mercenary ſenators and the blind obedience of mercenary ſoldiers. That mighty change, which terminates in the overthrow of tyranny, and the reſtoration of a people to their rights, muſt be undertaken by the farmer, the tradeſman, and the manufacturer, and particularly by thoſe who conſtitute the middle ranks of ſociety, that is to ſay, by thoſe very perſons who are moſt attentive to the duties, and beſt acquainted with the principles, of religion.

Nor has the religion of Jeſus operated beneficially, merely in the preſervation of literature, and in the promotion of virtuous morals in private life. Its effects have extended farther. It has had a ſenſible influence on laws and public inſtitutions.

But as it hath likewiſe been objected againſt Chriſtianity, that it has been the frequent cauſe of perſecuting ſtatutes and deſtructive wars, it is proper, previouſly to an enumeration of the benefits it has produced, to introduce an extract in reply to this objection; and to conſider whether it has been the proper and primary cauſes of events which ought ſo ſincerely to be deplored. 'Chriſtianity,' ſays archdeacon Paley, 'is charged with many 'conſequences for which it is not reſponſible. I believe, 'that religious motives have had no more to do, in the 'formation of nine-tenths of the intolerant and perſecuting laws, which in different countries have been eſtabliſhed upon the ſubject of religion, than they have 'had to do in England with the making of the game laws. 'Theſe meaſures, although they have the Chriſtian religion for their ſubject, are reſolvable into a principle, 'which Chriſtianity certainly did not plant (and which

'Chriſtianity

'Chriſtianity could not univerſally condemn, becauſe it
'is not univerſally wrong), which principle is no other
'than this, that they who are in poſſeſſion of power do
'what they can to keep it. Chriſtianity is anſwerable
'for no part of the miſchief, which has been brought
'upon the world by perſecution, except that which has
'ariſen from *conſcientious* perſecutors. Now theſe per-
'haps have never been, either numerous, or powerful.
'Nor is it to Chriſtianity that even *their* miſtake can
'fairly be imputed. They have been miſled by an error,
'not properly Chriſtian or religious, but by an error in
'their moral philoſophy. They purſued the particular,
'without adverting to the general, conſequence. Be-
'lieving certain articles of faith, or a certain mode of
'worſhip, to be highly conducive, or perhaps eſſential,
'to ſalvation, they thought themſelves bound to bring all
'they could, by every means, into them. And this they
'thought, without conſidering what would be the effect
'of ſuch a concluſion, when adopted amongſt mankind
'as a general rule of conduct. Had there been in the
'New Teſtament, what there are in the Koran, precepts
'authorizing coercion in the propagation of the religion,
'and the uſe of violence towards unbelievers, the caſe
'would have been different. This diſtinction could not
'have been taken, or this defence made.—If it be ob-
'jected, as I apprehend it will be, that Chriſtianity is
'chargeable with every miſchief, of which it has been the
'*occaſion*, though not the *motive*; I anſwer, that, if the
'malevolent paſſions be there, the world will never want
'occaſions. The noxious element will always find a
'conductor. Any point will produce an exploſion. Did
'the applauded intercommunity of the Pagan theology
'preſerve the peace of the Roman world? Did it prevent
'oppreſſions, proſcriptions, maſſacres, devaſtations? Was
'it bigotry that carried Alexander into the Eaſt, or

'brought

'brought Cæsar into Gaul? Are the nations of the 'world, into which Christianity hath not found its way, 'or from which it hath been banished, free from contentions? Are their contentions less ruinous and sanguinary? Is it owing to Christianity, or to the want of it, 'that the finest regions of the East, the countries *inter* '*quatuor maria*, the peninsula of Greece, together with 'a great part of the Mediterranean coast, are at this day a 'desart? or that the banks of the Nile, whose constantly 'renewed fertility is not to be impaired by neglect, nor 'destroyed by the ravages of war, serve only for the scene 'of a ferocious anarchy, or the supply of unceasing 'hostilities? Europe itself has known no religious wars 'for some centuries, yet has hardly ever been without 'war[102].'

Besides, it was during the dark ages, and particularly in the early part of the 13th century, that persecution was carried on with the greatest violence, in the name of Christianity. Now, says bp. Porteus, 'at a time when military 'ideas predominated in every thing, in the form of government, in the temper of the laws, in the tenure of lands, 'and even in the administration of justice itself, it could 'not be matter of much surprize, that the church should 'become military too[103].'

That Christianity has been the cause of various benefits to mankind, no infidel, who is possessed of tolerable candour and historical information, and who is desirous to maintain the reputation of good sense and impartiality, will presume to deny. The remarks that follow from Mr. Gibbon have not only a reference to the political state of nations, as influenced by the propagation of the gospel, but also to the topics which have already been considered, namely, its effects upon knowledge and upon

[102] Evid. of Chr. 2d. ed. vol. II. p. 384—387.

[103] Serm. p. 285.

morals.

morals. But the teſtimony they contain is ſo honourable to Chriſtianity, that I cannot reconcile my mind to their omiſſion.

In the 5th century, 'Chriſtianity was embraced by almoſt all the Barbarians, who eſtabliſhed their kingdoms on the ruins of the Weſtern empire.' It 'introduced an important change in their moral and political condition. They received, at the ſame time, the uſe of letters, ſo eſſential to a religion, whoſe doctrines are contained in a ſacred book, and, while they ſtudied the divine truth, their minds were inſenſibly enlarged by the diſtant view of hiſtory, of nature, of the arts, and of ſociety. The verſion of the Scriptures into their native tongue, which had facilitated their converſion, muſt excite, among their clergy, ſome curioſity to read the original text, to underſtand the ſacred liturgy of the church, and to examine, in the writings of the fathers, the chain of eccleſiaſtical tradition. Theſe ſpiritual gifts were preſerved in the Greek and Latin languages, which concealed the ineſtimable monuments of ancient learning. The immortal productions of Virgil, Cicero, and Livy, which were acceſſible to the Chriſtian Barbarians, maintained a ſilent intercourſe between the reign of Auguſtus, and the times of Clovis and Charlemagne. The emulation of mankind was encouraged by the remembrance of a more perfect ſtate; and the flame of ſcience was ſecretly kept alive, to warm and enlighten the mature age of the Weſtern world. In the moſt corrupt ſtate of Chriſtianity, the Barbarians might learn juſtice from the *law*, and mercy from the *goſpel:* and, if the knowledge of their duty was inſufficient to guide their actions, or to regulate their paſſions, they were ſometimes reſtrained by conſcience, and frequently puniſhed by remorſe. But the direct authority of religion was leſs effectual, than the holy communion which

'united them with their Chriſtian brethren in ſpiritual 'friendſhip. The influence of theſe ſentiments contri- 'buted to ſecure their fidelity in the ſervice, or the 'alliance, of the Romans, to alleviate the horrors of war, 'to moderate the inſolence of conqueſt, and to preſerve, 'in the downfal of the empire, a permanent reſpect for 'the name and inſtitutions of Rome.—The ſacred cha- 'racter of the biſhops was ſupported by their temporal 'poſſeſſions; they obtained an honourable ſeat in the 'legiſlative aſſemblies of ſoldiers and freemen; and it 'was their intereſt, as well as their duty, to mollify, by 'peaceful counſels, the fierce ſpirit of the Barbarians[104].

'The

[104] Thus 'in the year 990, ſeveral biſhops in the South of France aſ- 'ſembled, and publiſhed various regulations, in order to ſet ſome bounds 'to the violence and frequency of private wars; if any perſon in their dio- 'ceſes ſhould venture to tranſgreſs, they ordained, that he ſhould be ex- 'cluded from all Chriſtian privileges during his life, and be denied Chriſ- 'tian burial after his death.—A council was held at Limoges, A. D. 994. 'The bodies of the ſaints, according to the cuſtom of thoſe ages, were 'carried thither; and by theſe ſacred relics men were exhorted to lay 'down their arms, to extinguiſh their animoſities, and to ſwear that they 'would not for the future violate the public peace by their private hoſti- 'lities.—Several other councils iſſued decrees to the ſame effect.' In France a general peace and ceſſation from hoſtilities took place A. D. 1032, and continued for ſeven years, in conſequence of the methods which the biſhop of Aquitaine ſucceſsfully employed to work upon the ſuper- ſtition of the times. 'And a reſolution was formed, that no man ſhould 'in times to come attack or moleſt his adverſaries, during the ſeaſons ſet 'apart for celebrating the great feſtivals of the church, or from the evening 'of Thurſday in each week, to the morning of Monday in the week en- 'ſuing, the intervening days being conſidered as particularly holy, our 'Lord's Paſſion having happened on one of theſe days, and his Reſurrec- 'tion on another. A change in the diſpoſitions of men ſo ſudden, and 'which produced a reſolution ſo unexpected, was conſidered as miracu- 'lous; and the reſpite from hoſtilities, which followed upon it, was called '*the Truce of God*.—This, from being a regulation or concert in one king- 'dom, became a general law in Chriſtendom, was confirmed by the au- 'thority of ſeveral popes, and the violators were ſubjected to the penalty of excommunication.

'The perpetual correſpondence of the Latin clergy, the 'frequent pilgrimages to Rome and Jeruſalem, and the 'growing authority of the Popes, cemented the union of 'the Chriſtian republic: and gradually PRODUCED the 'ſimilar manners, and common juriſprudence, which 'have diſtinguiſhed, from the reſt of mankind, the inde-'pendent, and even hoſtile, nations of modern Europe.' And the hiſtorian obſerves in another place, that, 'in 'all the purſuits of active and ſpeculative life, the emu-'lation of ſtates and individuals is the moſt powerful 'ſpring of the efforts and improvements of mankind. 'The cities of ancient Greece,' he remarks, 'were caſt 'in the happy mixture of union and independence, which 'is repeated on a larger ſcale, but in a looſer form, by 'the nations of modern Europe: the union of language, 'religion, and manners, which renders them the ſpecta-'tors and judges of each other's merit: the indepen-'dence of government and intereſt, which aſſerts their 'ſeparate freedom, and excites them to ſtrive for pre-'eminence in the career of glory.'

'In the 9th, 10th, and 11th centuries of the Chriſtian 'æra, the reign of the goſpel and of the church was ex-'tended over Bulgaria, Hungary, Bohemia, Saxony,

'excommunication.—A ceſſation from hoſtilities during three complete 'days in every week allowed ſuch a conſiderable ſpace for the paſſions of 'the antagoniſts to cool, and for the people to enjoy a reſpite from the 'calamities of war, as well as to take meaſures for their own ſecurity, that, 'if *the Truce of God* had been exactly obſerved, it muſt have gone far to-'wards putting an end to private wars.' But 'the violent ſpirit of the 'nobility could not be reſtrained by any engagements. The complaints of 'this were frequent; and biſhops, in order to compel them to renew their 'vows and promiſes of ceaſing from their private wars, were obliged to 'enjoin their clergy to ſuſpend the performance of divine ſervice and the 'exerciſe of any religious function within the pariſhes of ſuch as were re-'fractory and obſtinate.' Dr. Robertſon's View of the Progreſs of So-ciety in Europe, &c. p. 335.

'Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Poland, and Ruſſia[105].—'Truth and candour muſt acknowledge, that the conver-'ſion of the North imparted many temporal benefits both 'to the old and the new Chriſtians.—The admiſſion of 'the Barbarians into the pale of civil and eccleſiaſtical 'ſociety delivered Europe from the depredations, by ſea 'and land, of the Normans, the Hungarians, and the 'Ruſſians, who learned to ſpare their brethren and cul-'tivate their poſſeſſions[106]. The eſtabliſhment of law 'and order was promoted by the influence of the clergy; 'and the rudiments of art and ſcience were introduced 'into the ſavage countries of the globe. The libe-'ral piety of the Ruſſian princes engaged in their ſer-'vice the moſt ſkilful of the Greeks, to decorate the 'cities and inſtruct the inhabitants.—The Sclavonic and 'Scandinavian kingdoms, which had been converted by 'the Latin miſſionaries, were expoſed, it is true, to the 'ſpiritual juriſdiction and temporal claims of the popes; 'but they were united, in language and religious worſhip, 'with each other, and with Rome; they imbibed the

[105] 'The firſt introduction of literature into Ruſſia muſt,' ſays Mr. Coxe, 'be aſcribed to Ulomir the Great, upon his converſion to Chriſtia-'nity in 988: that ſovereign even inſtituted ſchools, and paſſed a decree 'to regulate the mode of inſtructing youth in his dominions. His ſon 'Yaroſlof, who aſcended the throne in 1018, invited many learned prieſts 'from Conſtantinople; and cauſed various Greek books to be tranſlated 'into the Ruſſian tongue.—He eſtabliſhed a ſeminary at Novogorod for '300 Students; and gave to that republic the firſt code of written laws.' Travels into Poland, Ruſſia, &c. vol. III. p. 291.

[106] The following is a note of Mr. Gibbon. 'Liſten to the exultations 'of Adam of Bremen (A. D. 1080), of which the ſubſtance is agreeable 'to truth: Ecce illa ferociſſima Danorum, &c. natio—jamdudum novit in 'Dei laudibus Alleluia reſonare.—Ecce populus ille piraticus—ſuis nunc 'finibus contentus eſt. Ecce patria horribilis ſemper inacceſſa propter 'cultum idolorum—prædicatores veritatis ubique certatim admittit. &c. '(de Situ Daniæ, &c. p. 40, 41. edit. Elzevir: a curious and original 'proſpect of the North of Europe, and the introduction of Chriſtianity).'

'free

'free and generous ſpirit of the European republic, and 'gradually ſhared the light of knowledge which aroſe on 'the weſtern world[107].'

Thus then it appears, that Chriſtianity, beſides promoting in paſt times the progreſs of the arts and of civilization, has been a principal cauſe, that the nations of Europe, partially enlightened as it muſt be admitted they are, are, however, honourably diſtinguiſhed among the countries of the globe by the love of freedom and the capability of improvement.

That the clergy have had a beneficial influence, not merely in furniſhing many of the principal reformers of religion and reſtorers of learning, but in ſeveral other important reſpects, the preceding extracts from Mr. Gibbon are ſufficient to ſhew. This is a truth to which it is the more neceſſary to advert, in forming a true judgment of the effects they have upon *the whole* produced, becauſe it cannot be denied, that, in the centuries recently elapſed, the efforts of the eſtabliſhed clergy, as a body, have been decidedly detrimental to the cauſe of civil freedom. But it is not to Chriſtianity, that theſe efforts are to be attributed. They are reſolvable into a principle already noticed in the words of archdeacon Paley, 'that they who 'are in poſſeſſion of power do what they can to keep it;' or, to ſtate it ſomewhat more broadly, they originate in an eagerneſs to obtain poſſeſſion of riches and of power, and in a deſire, when poſſeſſed of them, to maintain and to augment them. Had Chriſtianity, then, never been propagated, ſtill, as another religion would have exiſted, and as this eagerneſs after wealth and authority would ſtill have prevailed, the clergy of that religion would not have failed to aid the attempts of the prince and the noble in the depreſſion of liberty. Of all religions the Chriſ-

[107] Vol. VI. p. 272, 275, vol. X. p. 163, 242, 243.

tian is the worſt adapted to promote the ſordid views of kings and prieſts.

The clergy, it may be added, were the cauſe, that the canon law was framed. Now although that law operated unqueſtionably, in ſome reſpects, in a manner unfavourable to civil liberty; yet thoſe ideas on the ſubject of government, and thoſe regulations in the diſtribution of juſtice, which prevail among the European nations, and which are ſo ſuperior in point of correctneſs to thoſe which are current in moſt other countries of the world, may be partly aſcribed to the introduction of the canon law into Europe. The clergy, ſays a maſterly delineator of the progreſs of ſociety in Europe, 'alone were accuſtomed to read, to inquire, and to reaſon. Whatever 'knowledge of ancient juriſprudence had been preſerved, 'either by tradition, or in ſuch books as had eſcaped the 'deſtructive rage of barbarians, was poſſeſſed by them. 'Upon the maxims of that excellent ſyſtem, they founded 'a code of laws conſonant to the great principles of 'equity. Being directed by fixed and known rules, the 'forms of their courts were aſcertained, and their deciſions became uniform and conſiſtent.—It is not ſurpriſing, then, that eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction ſhould become ſuch an object of admiration and reſpect, that exemption from civil juriſdiction was courted as a privilege, and conferred as a reward. It is not ſurpriſing, 'that, even to rude people, the maxims of the canon 'law ſhould appear more equal and juſt than thoſe of the 'ill-digeſted juriſprudence, which directed all proceedings in civil courts. According to the latter, the differences between contending barons were terminated, 'as in a ſtate of nature, by the ſword; according to the 'former, every matter was ſubjected to the deciſion of 'laws. The one, by permitting judicial combats, left 'chance and force to be arbiters of right and wrong, of

'truth

'truth or falſhood; the other paſſed judgment with re-
'ſpect to theſe by the maxims of equity, and the teſti-
'mony of witneſſes.' It may be added, that 'many of
'the regulations, now deemed the barriers of *perſonal*
'*ſecurity*, or the ſafeguards of *private property*, are con-
'trary to the ſpirit, and repugnant to the maxims, of the
'civil juriſprudence known in Europe during ſeveral
'centuries, and were borrowed from the rules and prac-
'tice of the eccleſiaſtical courts[108].'

It is to the general ſecurity of life, of liberty, and of property in this quarter of the globe, when contraſted with the cuſtomary violation of theſe great rights of man in the Aſiatic and African kingdoms, that we muſt principally attribute the higher pitch of proſperity, the ſuperior energy and activity of character, and the more advanced ſtate of the arts and of knowledge, which are to be found in the European nations. If, therefore, it be admitted, that the introduction of the canon law by the clergy has materially contributed to create a greater regard to perſons and to property, than would otherwiſe have prevailed in the Weſtern world; Chriſtianity muſt be acknowledged, in this reſpect, to have been of ſignal ſervice to the cauſe of freedom and the temporal intereſts of mankind.

'Chriſtianity has,' ſays Dr. Prieſtley, 'bettered the
'ſtate of the world in a civil and political reſpect, giving
'men a juſt idea of their mutual relations and natural
'rights[109], and thereby gradually aboliſhing ſlavery, with
'the ſervile ideas which introduced it, and alſo many

[108] Dr. Robertſon's View of the Progreſs of Society in Europe, 8vo. p. 76.

[109] 'The Chriſtian religion,' ſays Monteſquieu, 'in ſpite of the extent
'of the empire and the influence of the climate, has hindered deſpotic
'power from being eſtabliſhed in Æthiopia.' Spirit of Laws b. XXIV. c. 3.

'cruel and barbarous cuſtoms[110].' 'It would,' ſays Dr. Leechman, 'be a work for a treatiſe,—to trace out the 'civil laws which took their riſe from the ſpirit of Chriſ-'tianity, and to delineate their happy effects on ſociety, 'through a courſe of ages[111].' 'The Chriſtian religion,' ſays archdeacon Paley, 'acts upon public uſages and in-'ſtitutions, by an operation which is only ſecondary and 'indirect. Chriſtianity is not a code of civil law. It 'can only reach public inſtitutions through private cha-'racter. Now its influence upon private character may 'be conſiderable, yet many public uſages and inſtitutions, 'repugnant to its principles, may remain. To get rid of 'theſe, the reigning part of the community muſt act, and 'act together. But it may be long, before the perſons 'who compoſe this body be ſufficiently touched with the 'Chriſtian character, to join in the ſuppreſſion of prac-'tices, to which they and the public have been reconciled 'by cauſes, which will reconcile the human mind to any 'thing, by habit and intereſt. Nevertheleſs, the effects 'of Chriſtianity, even in this view, have been important. 'It has mitigated the conduct of war, and the treatment 'of captives. It has ſoftened the adminiſtration of deſ-'potic, or of nominally deſpotic governments. It has 'aboliſhed polygamy. It has reſtrained the licentiouſ-'neſs of divorces. It has put an end to the expoſure of 'children, and the immolation of ſlaves. It has ſup-'preſſed the combats of gladiators[112], and the impurities 'of

[110] Inſtit. of Nat. and Rev. Rel. vol. I. p. 378.

[111] The Wiſdom of God in the Goſpel-Revelation, a ſerm. preached at the Gen. Aſſembly of the Ch. of Scotland.

[112] Bp. Porteus, ſpeaking of the expoſure of infants, the ſhows of gladiators, and the uſage of ſlaves, as practiſed by the ancients, ſays, 'Theſe 'were not the accidental and temporary exceſſes of a ſudden fury, but 'were *legal*, and *eſtabliſhed*, and *conſtant* methods of murdering and tor-'menting mankind, encouraged by the wiſeſt legiſlators, and affording 'amuſement to the tendereſt and moſt compaſſionate minds. Had Chriſ-'tianity

'of religious rites. It has baniſhed, if not unnatural 'vices, at leaſt the toleration of them. It has greatly me-'liorated the condition of the laborious poor, that is to 'ſay, of the maſs of every community, by procuring for 'them a day of weekly reſt. In all countries, in which 'it is profeſſed, it has produced numerous eſtabliſhments 'for the relief of ſickneſs and poverty[113]; and, in ſome, 'a regular and general proviſion by law. It has 'triumphed over the ſlavery eſtabliſhed in the Roman 'empire: it is contending, and, I truſt, will one day pre-'vail, againſt the worſe ſlavery of the Weſt Indies[114].'

Now the knowledge of Chriſtianity having produced effects thus powerful on laws, political regulations, and national cuſtoms, will juſtify us in carrying our views ſtill farther, and in concluding, that it will not fail to accom-

'tianity done nothing more than brought into diſuſe (as it confeſſedly 'has done) the two former of theſe inhuman cuſtoms entirely, and the 'latter to a very great degree, it had juſtly merited the title of the Bene-'volent Religion.—Lipſius affirms (Saturn. l. I. c. 12.) that the gladiato-'rial ſhows ſometimes coſt Europe twenty or thirty thouſand lives in a 'month; and not only the men, but even the women of all ranks, were 'paſſionately fond of theſe ſhows.'

Theſe happy changes may, ſays the biſhop of London, perhaps be attributed to literature and to philoſophy. But were not Greece and Rome 'the very fountains of every thing that was ſublime and excellent in human 'wiſdom and polite literature, from whence they were diſtributed in the 'pureſt ſtreams over the reſt of the world, and deſcended to all ſucceed-'ing ages? Were they not carried, in thoſe great ſchools, to a degree of 'elegance and perfection, at which it is at leaſt doubtful whether the mo-'derns have yet arrived, or ever will? And yet in theſe very places, at a 'time when all the arts and ſciences were in their full ſtrength and ma-'turity, it was then that thoſe various inhumanities, which are by Chriſtians 'held in the utmoſt abhorrence, were publicly authorized.' Serm. p. 311.

[113] 'Examine the annals of all the heathen nations of antiquity; peruſe 'the modern accounts of Africa, India, China, and all the other parts of the 'globe, where Chriſtianity is not received, and you will in vain look for 'ſuch monuments of mercy, ſuch fruits of Chriſtian charity, as may be 'met with in every part of Chriſtendom.' Bp. Watſon's Serm. and Tracts, p. 173.

[114] Evid. of Chr. 2d ed. vol. II. p. 379.

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pliſh changes of no ſmall magnitude with reſpect to government in general. Indeed if we may believe the preſent biſhop of London, Chriſtianity has already 'inſenſibly worked itſelf into the inmoſt frame and conſtitution of civil ſtates[115].' I differ from his lordſhip only as to the time. That it is calculated to do this, and will hereafter effect the greateſt changes in this reſpect, is a ſtatement to which I am perfectly ready to ſubſcribe.

On the effects Chriſtianity has produced upon war and domeſtic ſlavery the celebrated author of the Hiſtory of Charles the Vth has treated at greater length. 'It is not,' ſays he, 'the authority of any ſingle detached precept 'in the goſpel, but the ſpirit and genius of the Chriſtian 'religion, more powerful than any particular command, 'which hath aboliſhed the practice of ſlavery through the 'world.' Wherever, indeed, ſuch opinions as thoſe contained in the New Teſtament 'prevail, no human creature can be regarded as altogether inſignificant and 'vile[116]; even the meaneſt acquire dignity; exterior 'diſtinctions diſappear; and men approach nearer to 'that original equality in which they were at firſt placed, 'and are ſtill viewed, by their impartial Creator.—Is 'no admiration due to the generous ſpirit of that religion, 'which reſtored liberty, not to one nation or ſociety 'alone, but reſcued from the worſt ſervitude far the 'greater number of the human race, and acquired for 'them that happy freedom which they ſtill enjoy? When 'we behold Chriſtianity making its progreſs through the 'world, and working every where ſuch an important alteration in the condition of mankind, we may well apply to a temporal deliverance what the prophet ſpoke 'concerning a ſpiritual ſalvation; *Behold, the acceptable*

[115] Porteus's Serm. p. 310.

[116] See the obſervations in p. 362 and 363 of the preſent work.

'*year*

'*year of the Lord is come! Liberty is proclaimed to the* '*captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are* '*bound. They shall rest from their sorrow, and from their* '*fear, and from the hard bondage wherein they were* '*made to serve* [117].'

These observations are general. The same judicious writer elsewhere considers the subject with more minuteness of detail. 'The gentle spirit,' says he[118], 'of 'the Christian religion, the doctrines which it teaches 'concerning the original equality of mankind, its tenets 'with respect to the divine government, and the impar-'tial eye with which the Almighty regards men of every 'condition, and admits them to a participation of its be-'nefits, are all inconsistent with servitude. But in this, 'as in many other instances, considerations of interest, 'and the maxims of false policy, led men to a conduct 'inconsistent with their principles. They were so sen-'sible, however, of this inconsistency, that to set their 'fellow-christians at liberty from servitude was deemed 'an act of piety highly meritorious and acceptable to 'heaven. The humane spirit of the Christian religion 'struggled long with the maxims and manners of the 'world, and contributed more than any other circum-'stance to introduce the practice of manumission.— 'A great part of the charters of manumission, previous 'to the reign of Louis X. are granted *pro amore Dei*, '*pro remedio animæ, et pro mercede animæ*.—The for-'mality of manumission was executed in a church, as 'a religious solemnity. The person to be set free was led 'round the great altar with a torch in his hand, he took 'hold of the horns of the altar, and there the solemn 'words conferring liberty were pronounced.—Manumis-

[117] Is. lxi. 1. xiv. 3. *The Situation of the World at the Time of Christ's Appearance:* a serm. by W. Robertson, D. D. preached before the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge, Jan. 6. 1755.

[118] View of the Progress of Society in Europe, &c. p. 322—325.

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'ſion was frequently granted on a death-bed or by latter-'will. As the minds of men are at that time awakened 'to ſentiments of humanity and piety, theſe deeds pro-'ceeded from religious motives, and were granted *pro* 'redemptione animæ, in order to obtain acceptance with 'God.—Another method of obtaining liberty was by en-'tering into holy orders, or taking the vow in a monaſ-'tery.—Conformably to the ſame principles, princes, on 'the birth of a ſon, or upon any other agreeable event, 'appointed a certain number of ſlaves to be enfranchiſed, 'as a teſtimony of their gratitude to God for that benefit. 'There are ſeveral forms of munumiſſion publiſhed by 'Marculfus, and all of them are founded on religious 'conſiderations, in order to obtain the favour of God, or 'to obtain the forgiveneſs of their ſins.'

Now, it may be obſerved, that without the abolition of domeſtic ſervitude, political freedom could never have ſtood on a right baſis. Indeed without this preparatory revolution, it is not poſſible to conceive, how a declaration of the Rights of Man could have been adopted, or a fair repreſentative government could ever have been conſtructed.

'The abolition of domeſtic ſlavery was,' ſays Dr. Robertſon, 'the occaſion of another change in the man-'ners of men, which is no leſs remarkable. Captives 'taken in war were, in all probability, the firſt perſons 'ſubjected to perpetual ſervitude: and when the neceſ-'ſities or luxury of mankind increaſed the demand for 'ſlaves, every new war recruited their number, by 'reducing the vanquiſhed to that wretched condition. 'Hence proceeded the fierce and deſperate ſpirit, with 'which wars were carried on among ancient nations. 'While chains and ſlavery were the certain lot of the 'conquered, battles were fought, and towns defended, 'with a rage and obſtinacy, which nothing but horror at

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'ſuch a fate could have inſpired: but by putting an end 'to the cruel inſtitution of ſlavery, Chriſtianity extended 'its mild influence to the practice of war; and that bar-'barous art, ſoftened by its humane ſpirit, ceaſed to be 'ſo deſtructive[119].'

Having endeavoured, by the aid of extracts, to diſplay the important influence Chriſtianity has had upon literature and knowledge, upon morals, and upon laws and political inſtitutions; I ſhall inſert one or two quotations relative to the Proteſtant Reformation, which, though extremely incomplete, may nevertheleſs be regarded as a republication of the ſcriptures and of Chriſtianity. Had not Chriſtianity exiſted, and produced the effects it did, it has been ſeen, that the reſtoration of ancient learning could hardly ever have taken place. Now it was to the revival of learning, that the authors of the Reformation were indebted for the boldneſs of their inquiries and their comparative freedom from prejudice, for the preſervation of their lives and the accompliſhment of that important revolution which they effected[120]; and it is to the Reformation, that civil liberty is greatly indebted for the progreſs it has made.

Experience ſhews, ſays Dr. Blair, 'that, in propor-'tion as religious knowledge diffuſes its light, learning 'flouriſhes, and liberal arts are cultivated and advanced. 'Juſt conceptions of religion promote a free and manly 'ſpirit. They lead men to think for themſelves; to 'form their principles upon free inquiry; and not to 'reſign their conſcience to the dictates of men. Hence 'they naturally inſpire averſion to ſlavery of every 'kind; and promote a taſte for liberty and laws. Deſ-'potic governments have generally taken the firmeſt root 'among nations that were blinded by Mahometan or

[119] Dr. Robertſon's ſerm. ut ſupra.

[120] In p. 33 ſee another cauſe ſtated, which originated in Chriſtianity, and greatly promoted the Proteſtant Reformation.

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'Pagan darkneſs; where the throne of violence has been 'ſupported by ignorance and falſe religion. In the Chriſ-'tian world, during thoſe centuries in which groſs ſuper-'ſtition held its reign undiſturbed, oppreſſion and ſla-'very were in its train. The cloud of ignorance ſat thick 'and deep over the nations; and the world was threat-'ened with a relapſe into ancient barbariſm. As ſoon as 'the true *knowledge of the Lord* revived, at the auſpi-'cious æra of the Reformation, learning, liberty, and 'arts, began to ſhine forth with it, and to reſume their 'luſtre[121].'

Another of the moſt elegant writers of Scotland, his majeſty's late hiſtoriographer for that country, after aſ-ſerting, that the Reformation 'produced a revolution in 'the ſentiments of mankind, the greateſt, as well as the 'moſt beneficial, that has happened ſince the publication 'of Chriſtianity;' ſays, 'the human mind, which had con-'tinued long as tame and paſſive, as if it had been formed 'to believe whatever was taught, and to bear whatever 'was impoſed, rouſed of a ſudden, and became inquiſitive, 'mutinous, and diſdainful of the yoke to which it had 'hitherto ſubmitted.—Nor was this ſpirit of innovation 'confined to thoſe countries which openly revolted from 'the pope[122]: it ſpread through all Europe, and broke

[121] Blair's Sermons, vol. II. p. 451.

[122] Dr. Robertſon ſays in another place, 'The deſire of equalling the re-'formers in thoſe talents which had procured them reſpect, the neceſ-'ſity of acquiring the knowledge requiſite for defending their own tenets, 'or refuting the arguments of their opponents, together with the emulation 'natural between two rival churches, engaged the Roman Catholic clergy to 'apply themſelves to the ſtudy of uſeful ſcience, which they cultivated with 'ſuch aſſiduity and ſucceſs, that they have gradually become as eminent in 'literature, as they were in ſome periods infamous for ignorance.' Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. IV. p. 325. It may be added, that ſome of the moſt cele-brated politicians whom France has produced, and who moſt contributed to the French revolution by their writings, belonged to the Romiſh church. Such are the abbés Mably and Raynal, Gregoire and Sieyes.

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'out in every part of it with various degrees of violence. 'It penetrated early into France, and made quick progreſs 'there.—The Reformation, wherever it was received, 'increaſed that bold and innovating ſpirit to which it 'owed its birth. Men, who had the courage to over-'turn a ſyſtem, ſupported by every thing which can 'command reſpect or reverence, were not to be over-'awed by any authority, how great or venerable ſoever. 'After having been accuſtomed to conſider themſelves 'as judges of the moſt important doctrines in religion, to 'examine theſe freely, and to reject, without ſcruple, 'what appeared to them erroneous, it was natural for 'them to turn the ſame daring and inquiſitive eye to-'wards government, and to think of rectifying whatever 'diſorders or imperfections were diſcovered there. As 'religious abuſes had been reformed in ſeveral places 'without the permiſſion of the magiſtrate, it was an eaſy 'tranſition to attempt the redreſs of political grievances 'in the ſame manner[123].'

There is a ſhort paſſage in Dr. Hartley ſo much to my preſent purpoſe, that I cannot avoid quoting it, though a *part* of it has already been inſerted in a *note*. 'All the 'known governments of the world have the evident 'principles of corruption in themſelves. They are com-'poſed of jarring elements, and ſubſiſt only by the al-ter-'nate prevalence of theſe over each other. The ſplen-'dour, luxury, ſelf-intereſt, martial glory, &c. which 'paſs for eſſentials in Chriſtian governments, are totally 'oppoſite to the meek, humble, ſelf-denying ſpirit of 'Chriſtianity? and whichſoever of theſe finally prevails 'over the other, the preſent form of the government 'muſt be diſſolved[124].'

[123] Reign of Charles V. 8 vo. vol. II. p. 104, 335; vol. IV. p. 320.
[124] On Man, 1749, vol. II. 366.

'Chriſtianity,'

'Chriſtianity, 'ſays Mr. Wakefield, in a paſſage from which I have before given a ſhort extract in a note, 'is 'no other, than the cauſe of liberty, and the conſequent 'happineſs of the human race: a liberty and happineſs only to be raiſed on the foundation of that 'equality aſcertained by the laws of our creation, and 'ratified by the goſpel in every page, which acknowleges 'no diſtinction of *bond* or *free*. Intereſt may oppoſe, 'and ſophiſtry may cavil; but *Equality*, in its rational 'acceptation, as relating to civil privileges and impartial laws, is interwoven with *Chriſtianity* itſelf: they 'muſt live or periſh together. But they will live; and 'modern governments, with every appendage of wickedneſs and corruption, will in time diſappear before 'them, as beaſts of prey haſten to their dens of rapine 'and darkneſs from the riſing ſun[125].'

Having quoted from ſo large an aſſemblage of able writers, I ſhall diſmiſs the ſubject, as ſoon as I ſhall have briefly recapitulated, and drawn towards a point the two principal arguments, which may be urged in reply to the objection ſtated in the ſequel of the laſt chapter, and which are corroborated by the facts and reaſonings of the preſent appendix.

Chriſtianity has been the principal cauſe of preſerving the knowledge, and encouraging the ſtudy, of the learned languages. The ſtudy of the learned languages has occaſioned the reſurrection of letters, the reſurrection of letters has occaſioned the diffuſion of knowledge, and the diffuſion of knowledge has been the grand cauſe of the fall of the Gallic monarchy, and will at length be fatal to the other European deſpotiſms.

The exiſting governments of the continent of Europe are conſtructed and adminiſtered on principles oppoſite to the moral laws contained in the New Teſtament. A

[125] Spirit of Chriſtianity compared with the Spirit of the Times, p. 26.

large

large part of the people of Europe derive their notions directly or indirectly from that ſacred volume. The exiſtence of governments ultimately depends upon opinion[126]. And I, therefore, infer, reaſoning upon theſe three propoſitions, that the principles of Chriſtianity will powerfully contribute to the overthrow of the tyrannies of Europe.

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That Chriſtianity, by communicating to the mind a ſpirit of benevolence and a ſpirit of fortitude, forcibly impells men to embrace the cauſe of civil liberty, and eminently qualifies them, when an adequate occaſion ariſes, to ſtand forward as its moſt intrepid ſupporters, were two of the important propoſitions, which, at the cloſe of ch. xxx, I undertook to prove by the aid of two powerful auxiliaries, the preſent biſhops of London and Worceſter. After the whole of the work, which precedes the preſent page, was printed, I met with ſome obſervations, which contain ſo much ſolid ſenſe, and are ſo powerfully corroborative of the arguments alleged in favour of theſe propoſitions; that I have been induced, notwithſtanding their length, and notwithſtanding the ſubject was brought to a concluſion, to determine in favour of their inſertion. They are taken from two Sermons, written by Dr. Leechman, late Principal of the College of Glaſgow, and founded on thoſe words of St. Paul, that *God hath not given us the ſpirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a ſound mind*[127].

After obſerving, that '*love*, in the New Teſtament,

[126] 'Let civil governors—be admoniſhed, that the phyſical ſtrength 'reſides in the governed; that this ſtrength wants only to be felt and 'rouſed, to lay proſtrate the moſt ancient and confirmed dominion; that 'civil authority is founded in opinion; that general opinion therefore 'ought always to be treated with deference, and managed with delicacy 'and circumſpection.' Paley's Principles of Mor. and Pol. Phil. 7th ed. vol. II. p. 125.

[127] 2 Tim. I, 7.

'when ſpoken of in general, uſually ſignifies *the love of* '*our brethren*,' and 'that the genius of Chriſtianity is 'love;' profeſſor Leechman ſays, 'when we attend to the 'preceptive and ſentimental parts of the goſpel, we find, 'that the ſpirit of love breathes in all of them. That the 'precepts of Chriſtianity tend to reſtrain and ſuppreſs 'all the malevolent paſſions, and to promote the culture 'and improvement of the kind and friendly ones, can 'admit of no doubt.' Now it is love, 'which leads men 'to relieve the neceſſities, to ſympathiſe with the ſor-'rows, and to ſhare in the joys, of all mankind.' It 'inſpires the ſoul with generous and noble deſigns.—'Thoſe heroic actions, which are recorded in hiſtory, 'and which we read with admiration, have, for the 'moſt part, been the effects of the love of one's coun-'try, of particular friendſhip, or of an ardent zeal for 'ſome important intereſts of mankind. Thus heroiſm, 'the trueſt heroiſm, derives its chief excellence and 'ſtrength from the ſpirit of love.—Farther, the points 'of light, in which Chriſtianity places our fellow-men, 'are ſuch as are ſuited to affect us in the moſt powerful 'and tender manner. We are all, whether high or low, 'rich or poor, learned or unlearned, equally the chil-'dren of the ſame great family, and equally under the 'protection, and at the diſpoſal, of the almighty and all-'wiſe providence of the ſame great Parent of all. We 'are all fellow-travellers through this ſtate of pilgrimage, 'in which we are all expoſed to the like wants, dangers, 'and diſtreſſes. We have all the like imperfections and 'infirmities, equally liable to fail in our duty to one an-'other, and therefore equally ſtanding in need of for-'giveneſs at one another's hands.' For our hopes, alſo, we are equally dependent. 'Theſe views of our brethren 'of mankind are certainly fitted to bring down the moſt 'lofty looks, and to convince the proudeſt of the ſons 'of men, that, notwithſtanding all the diſtinctions and

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'preeminences on which they value themſelves, they 'are, in reality, on a level in the moſt important re-'ſpects with the pooreſt and loweſt of the human race.'

'If we may form a judgment of the ſpirit of Chriſti-'anity from *the ſpirit of its author*, we muſt acknow-'ledge it to be a ſpirit of courage and boldneſs.—For it 'appears, in the moſt inconteſtible manner, from the 'whole hiſtory of our Saviour's life, that, while he ſup-'ported the beſt of all cauſes, he ſet himſelf, though ſin-'gle, in a moſt intrepid manner, in oppoſition to a whole 'nation.—His firſt *diſciples*, in like manner, diſcovered 'a ſpirit of the moſt active and determined courage. We 'read in the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apoſtles, 'that when the Jewiſh Sanhedrim, the ſupreme council 'of the nation, called the Apoſtles Peter and John be-'fore them, and commanded them, verſe 18, *not to 'teach in the name of Jeſus*; verſe 19, *they anſwered 'and ſaid unto them, whether it is right in the ſight of 'God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge 'ye; for we cannot but ſpeak the things we have ſeen 'and heard;* and they accordingly went out from the 'council, and preached the goſpel with all boldneſs. And 'we read in the ſame chapter, that even their enemies 'were ſtruck with admiration, when they beheld the 'firmneſs of their reſolution: verſe 13, *when the mem-'bers of the council ſaw the boldneſs of Peter and John, 'and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant 'men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, 'that they had been with Jeſus*; that is, they perceived 'they had learned boldneſs and intrepidity in his ſchool. 'If your time would allow us to trace the ſpirit of Chriſ-'tianity, as it appeared in *the primitive Chriſtians*, we 'ſhould find, that perſons of all ranks, ſexes, and ages, 'ſhewed ſuch an unſhaken firmneſs and fortitude, under 'the ſevereſt trials, even death itſelf, as filled their very 'enemies and perſecutors with aſtoniſhment.'

'If we may judge of the ſpirit of the Goſpel from *the* '*ſtrain of its precepts*, we muſt alſo conclude it to be a 'ſpirit of reſolution and fortitude.'

'*The unfeigned belief and ſincere practice of the Chriſ-* 'tian religion has,' likewiſe, an obvious tendency to inſpire zeal and courage in every virtuous cauſe. This will be evident, if we conſider, 1ſt, that 'Chriſtianity is '*the beſt preſervative* from all thoſe things, which damp 'the vigour of the mind, and enervate its active powers; 'and, 2dly, that it *ſupplies the moſt powerful incitements* 'to act every worthy part in life in the firmeſt and moſt 'vigorous manner.'

By guarding againſt baſe and unworthy behaviour, it will preſerve the mind from being fearful and irreſolute. 'Every one knows, that guilt is, in its own nature, the 'ſource of ſelf-condemnation and of dread of deſerved 'puniſhment; that it naturally fills the countenance with 'ſhame, and the heart with terror; and that, when the 'mind is under the influence of theſe enfeebling paſſions, 'it muſt be timid and dejected, and incapable either of 'forming or of executing any manly and worthy deſign. 'It is likewiſe obvious to every one, that thoſe, who 'have imbibed the ſpirit of Chriſtianity, will be preſerved 'from thoſe preſumptuous ſins, which ſtrike terror into 'the conſcience; and, that they will have ſuch truſt in 'the promiſes of the Goſpel for the pardon of their in- 'voluntary failings, as will eſtabliſh them in peace of 'mind, and in the humble hope of the favour and ac- 'ceptance of God. In this peaceful ſtate of mind, they 'will be in full poſſeſſion of their active powers[128], and 'ready

[128] Dr. Leechman's conduct through life, and on the approach of death, corresponded to the ſublime views which he has drawn of the chriſtian character. During the laſt ſix weeks of his life, when he was confined to his bed, 'he exhibited,' ſays his biographer, Dr. Wodrow, 'a ſpectacle 'not

'ready to exert them, whenever and wherever duty 'calls.—Again; that unmanly habits of indulgence in 'pleaſure ſoften and enervate men's minds, and make 'them fly from every ſcene, where labour and fatigue, 'where activity or boldneſs are required, has ever been 'admitted as a certain truth.' Now theſe habits are ſtrictly prohibited by Chriſtianity.

So far from acknowledging, that Chriſtianity furniſhes powerful incitements to perform every honourable part in life in a vigorous and undaunted manner, Rouſſeau, on the contrary, 'alleges, that the true Chriſtian's 'faith of another world, and a better life, extinguiſhes 'all concern in him for this preſent world, and this pre'ſent life, or, at leaſt, that it renders him incapable of 'any brave and courageous efforts to preſerve or pro'mote any advantages, that relate only to ſuch a tranſi'tory ſtate. But he has given no reaſon, that can con'vince any unprejudiced perſon, that a Chriſtian, though 'of the moſt elevated and heavenly turn of mind, muſt 'have a leſs warm and delicate ſenſe of the liberties, or 'of any of the juſt privileges, of mankind, or muſt have 'leſs zeal for the intereſts of his country, his family, or 'friends, merely on the account of his lively hopes of

'not of compaſſion or regret, but worthy of admiration, a great ſoul in 'a manner wiihout a body; for his bodily powers were all gone, except 'the power of ſpeech, and this ſometimes ſcarcely audible. But his mind 'retained its wonted vigour.—When ſome of us could not help expreſſing 'ſome ſurprize at his ſingular compoſure and fortitude, he confeſſed, he 'had often been a coward for pain, and perhaps was ſo ſtill; but 'added, that he never had been afraid of death. His generous and kind 'affections too continued to flow with their uſual vigour. He entered 'with ſpirit into anything connected with the cauſe of religion and learning.—To the few very intimate friends, who had the happineſs to converſe with him on his death-bed, his mind appeared—quite tranſported 'with the unbounded and endleſs proſpects of Divine goodneſs that were 'before him.' Life of Dr. Leechman, prefixed to his Sermons, p. 88—90.

'another and better life beyond the grave. Beſides, 'when we reflect, that a main part of the duty of a 'Chriſtian, according to the principles of his religion, 'lies in doing good, in promoting the happineſs of others 'to the utmoſt of his power; it is not eaſy to conceive, 'how his firm hopes of immortality ſhould render him 'indifferent to his duty, and incapable of all vigorous 'and manly efforts to diſcharge it.'

'It ſeems to be a more natural concluſion, that the 'firm hopes of a future glorious life would animate the 'real Chriſtian to diſcharge his duty with the utmoſt 'faithfulneſs, and, particularly, would diſpoſe him to 'labour with the utmoſt vigour to do good to his bre-'thren of mankind, though it ſhould be at the expenſe 'of a tranſient and uncertain life, that is ſoon to be ſuc-'ceeded by a permanent and eternal one.'

'Every one, who has attended to the finer and nobler 'workings of the human heart,—muſt be convinced, that 'a warm love of that moral excellence, which is the chief 'glory of the divine nature itſelf, earneſt breathings after 'nearer approaches to the perfection of it, a lively ſenſe 'of duty, a full conviction that the doing that duty is 'the will of God, and ſtrong impulſes of the friendly 'and public affections, are, without all doubt, the moſt 'powerful and commanding principles in the human 'breaſt. When they unite their force, and operate with 'all their ſtrength, nothing can withſtand them. If we 'attend to what paſſes in life, we ſhall ſee the moſt con-'vincing proofs of this: for, whenever a mind, under 'the influence of theſe great principles, has its views fixed 'upon ſome great or good end, in the proſecution of 'which oppoſition, difficulty, or danger is foreſeen, then 'holy Chriſtian reſolution exerts itſelf with its whole 'ſtrength; and, indeed, becomes in a manner invincible, 'ſo that hardly any difficulty or danger can ſtand before 'it.

'it. And we may eaſily conceive, how it ſhould be ſo, 'when we reflect upon the illuſtrious and mighty ſup-'ports, which our worthy reſolutions receive from the 'exerciſe of Chriſtian faith and piety. The full aſ-'ſurance of divine approbation and aid muſt ever inſpire 'the ſoul with confidence and alacrity, in acting that part 'which truth and integrity require. It is impoſſible, 'even in imagination, to conceive any thing better cal-'culated for emboldening the human mind, and ſupport-'ing its moſt determined reſolutions, than the firm per-'ſuaſion, that the Divine adminiſtration is ever on the 'ſide of righteouſneſs, and that the righteous man ſhall 'be moſt amply and gloriouſly rewarded for whatever he 'may have ſuffered for his adherence to it.—Conſcious 'of his honeſt endeavours to do his duty, though amidſt 'many weakneſſes and infirmities, he ſolaces himſelf with 'the modeſt but triumphant hope, through the mercy of 'God in Jeſus Chriſt, that all his good intentions, all his 'ſecret acts of goodneſs, all his ſilent ſufferings and 'ſtruggles, and all his ſervices, are recorded, and ſhall 'be one day publiſhed, honoured, and rewarded, on the 'grandeſt of all theatres, before an aſſembled world. 'Theſe hopes cheer and gladden, and at the ſame time 'ſtrengthen, his heart, in the hour of danger, in the day 'of diſtreſs, and in the proſecution of every virtuous 'deſign.'

'And, wherever this ſuperiority to the fear of man, 'and the fear of temporal evils and dangers, flows from 'the principles of the Goſpel, it will be accompanied 'with a noble freedom and independence of ſoul, that 'can never dwell with mean and ſlaviſh principles. Men, 'though in the loweſt ſtation of life, who have a juſt 'ſenſe of the dignity of human nature, and of thoſe 'Chriſtian virtues which dignify it, will diſcover, on 'proper occaſions, a ſtrength and greatneſs of mind,

'which will make them disdain every thing, that ap-
'proaches in any degree to meanness, cowardice, or slavish
'fear.' It may also be added, 'that a courage, derived
'from these principles and motives,—will be more ra-
'tional and vigorous, more firm and permanent, than
'that which flows merely from animal spirits, from ex-
'ternal accidents, from the love of glory, or from what
'the world calls a sense of honour.'

Some perhaps will object, 'that the tendency of
'Christianity is only to form men to a kind of passive
'courage or patience under sufferings; but that it has
'no tendency to form them to that active courage, which
'distinguishes the hero from the confessor. Let it suf-
'fice to answer to this objection, that that unremitting
'zeal and activity, which prompted the apostle Paul, for
'instance, to spend thirty years in journies by land, voy-
'ages by sea, amidst numberless difficulties, dangers, and
'sufferings, to propagate Christianity, would have ope-
'rated in the same manner, and excited to the like inde-
'fatigable labours and efforts, if Providence had called
'him to defend his country, to support the rights and
'privileges of mankind, or to profecute any other worthy
'undertaking. It seems natural to conceive, that a mag-
'nanimity and activity of mind, which were manifested
'in such an uniform and conspicuous manner through
'the whole of the apostle's life, in promoting one great
'cause, would have displayed themselves in a similar
'way, if he had been engaged in any other important
'cause, which reason, religion, and the good of man-
'kind, would justify and recommend[129].'

[129] Dr. Leechman's Sermons, 1789, vol. I. p. 351—391.

CHAPTER

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### On the True Nature of the Millennium.

THAT men of ſenſe and reflexion, who have not made the doctrine of THE MILLENNIUM particularly an object of their inquiries, ſhould often have entertained it with doubt, or rejected it with boldneſs, is no ground of ſurprize. Of the writers, on the book of revelation, and the other prophecies of ſcripture, extremely few have had any comprehenſive views on the magnitude of thoſe improvements, which, there are juſt grounds for expecting, will hereafter be accompliſhed, with reſpect to the ſituation, the opinions, and the conduct of mankind. The mighty influence of political inſtitutions, and the complete revolution in the ſtate of ſociety, which will gradually be produced by juſtly conſtructed governments, have ſcarcely ever been the ſubjects of their ſpeculation. Hence *many of them* have been haſtily led to conclude, that the great changes in favour of mankind, foretold in ſcripture, muſt either relate to a future and eternal world; or that they muſt point to a ſtate of things on this globe, which will not take place, until ſome of the primary laws of nature ſhall have been ſuſpended, and the earth ſhall have ſupernaturally received an altered form. And, indeed, I am not acquainted with *a ſingle Engliſh author* who has written at any length on the millennium, who appears to have entertained notions, which, in my eſtimation, would deſerve to be entitled at once correct and elevated. Such a picture of the millenniary period may, however,

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I am perſuaded, be drawn, as is alike rational and encouraging, alike agreeable to the predictions of ſcripture and to the expectations of philoſophy.

Of thoſe who have treated of the millenniary period at conſiderable length, no writer perhaps has excited ſo much attention as Dr. Thomas Burnet[1]. Like Milton, indeed, he poſſeſſed an imagination in a high degree fervid and adventurous, which loved to wander in paths which had never before been trodden, and to quit this world[2], in order to viſit others, inhabited by different beings, and ſubject to different laws. He has accordingly erected a ſublime, though falſe[3], Theory. By dexterity in confounding the events of different periods, by the mixture of probability with fiction, by the joint aid of argument and of authority, by the allegation of a number of circumſtances really foretold in the pages of prophecy, he has ſtrongly arreſted the attention, and has ſometimes conquered the incredulity, of his readers. Still, however, whilſt he has had many to admire, he has had but few to follow, him.

[1] This eminent Scotchman received his education at Clare Hall, in Cambridge. He was admitted there in the year 1651; but he did not publiſh the two firſt books of his *Telluris Theoria Sacra* till the year 1680, nor the two remaining books till the year 1689.

[2] 'The ſpheres of men's underſtandings,' ſays Dr. Burnet, 'are as 'different, as proſpects upon the earth: ſome ſtand upon a rock or a 'mountain, and ſee far round about; others are in a hollow, or in a 'cave, and have no proſpect at all. Some men conſider nothing but what 'is preſent to their ſenſes; others extend their thoughts both to what is 'paſt, and what is future.—I know not by what good fate, my thoughts 'have been always fixed upon things to come, more than upon things 'preſent.' *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, vol. II. p. 5, 179.

[3] With reſpect to thoſe parts of Dr. Burnet's Theory, which relate to the laws of motion and the principles of natural philoſophy, I cite the words of an able mathematician. 'NONE of theſe wonderful effects, 'which he endeavours to explain, could have proceeded from the cauſes 'he aſſigns.' Keill's *Exam. of Dr. Burnet's Theory*, 1698. Intr. p. 26.

Of

Of Dr. Burnet's ideas, relative to the future hiſtory of the globe, the five following paragraphs contain ſome of the principal outlines.

When the exiſting ſtate of ſociety terminates, and the prophecies relative to the kings of the earth are about to receive their complete fulfilment; when Antichriſt receives his final overthrow, and Satan is diveſted of the power of executing any farther plans of miſchief; the period for the burning of the globe will arrive. The great agents of nature will combine to prepare the way for this great cataſtrophe. The work of deſtruction will not be difficult; nor is the mode, by which it will be accompliſhed, altogether inexplicable. The earth is furniſhed with abundant ſtores of nitre and ſulphur, and with all the materials of the volcano and the earthquake. The antediluvian earth was regular and cloſe in all its parts; without caverns and without mountains. But that which we inhabit contains the ruins only of what it once was: and theſe ruins, which, at the memorable period of the deluge, were recovered from the water, when the earth's exterior covering fell into the central abyſs, are not only unequal at their ſurface, but within alſo are hollow, looſe, and incompact. Innumerable, therefore, are its outlets, and it is in moſt places capable of ventilation, and pervious to fire. Previouſly alſo to the general conflagration, there will, it may be expected, long be a cloudleſs ſky and a heated air: in conſequence of which the ſprings and rivulets will be dried up; the ground will be overſpread with fiſſures; the graſs and the turf, the ſhrub and the foreſt, will be eaſily convertible into fuel; and the oily parts of bodies, together with the ſcattered portions of fire, which lie impriſoned in many hard ſubſtances, will undergo the proceſs of ſeparation, and in a great degree be ſet afloat.

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At this period, and antecedently to the commencement of the millennium, Chriſt will deſcend upon earth, the luſtre of the ſun being veiled, and the heavens involved in gloom. On his approach, the ſummits of the mountains will ſmoke, the earth will ſhake, the ſea will retire within its deepeſt receſſes, the clouds will be the ſeat of thunder and pointed lightnings, the air will gleam with the coruſcations of innumerable meteors, and, from the number, magnitude, or proximity of the comets which will be viſible, the higher regions of the ſky will aſſume a new and terrific aſpect. When our Saviour, ſitting in a flaming chariot, and ſurrounded by an infinite hoſt of angels and arch-angels, draws near to the earth, its inhabitants will ſee, will tremble, will be aſtoniſhed.

On an appointed ſignal, the deſtroying and the tutelary angels execute their inſtructions. To the care of the latter, there is reaſon to hope, will be intruſted virtuous manhood and upright old age, the feebleneſs of infancy and the innocence of childhood. The treaſuries of fire in earth and in heaven are opened; and ſhortly the ſaddeſt ſpectacles, which eye can behold, preſent themſelves on every ſide. The cities of the earth are in one univerſal blaze. Innumerable millions of either ſex and of every rank ſink under the agonies of death, in its moſt frightful forms. Rivers of ſulphur ruſh into the ſea, and encounter the fury of its waters; wreaths of fire, and pillars of ſmoke, are every where combined; hills are hurled into the air; and ten thouſand volcanoes at once diſcharge their flames. By the force of one element, all the works of art, all the labours of man, all the varieties of nature, are annihilated. Whatever was diſtinguiſhed by utility, or by elegance, or by magnificence, is obliterated. Where are now the powerful empires of the world, and their great Imperial cities? Where do their

pillars

pillars and their trophies ſtand; or where is the proud inſcription, or the victor's name? Fire is a cruel enemy, who makes no diſtinction. Rome itſelf, *eternal* Rome, the Empreſs of the world, whoſe dominion in ancient and modern times conſtitutes an ample portion of its hiſtory, is overthrown and utterly ſubverted, notwithſtanding the depth of her foundations and the ſtrength of her palaces. The conflagration at length reaches beyond the external ſhell of the earth, and grows more intenſe. The rocks and loftieſt mountains, which have ſuſtained the artillery of heaven for ſo many ages, are torn from their foundations. *Here* ſtood the Alps, a prodigious range of rugged mountains, which extended their arms from the ſhores of the ocean to the banks of the Black Sea. Now this mighty maſs of ſtone is looſened, and melts away, as a tender cloud ſoftens into rain. *Here* ſtood the African mountains, and Atlas, with his head above the clouds. *There* was frozen Caucaſus, and Taurus, and Imaus, and the mountains of Aſia. And *yonder*, towards the North, ſtood the Riphæan hills, cloathed in ice and ſnow. All theſe are vaniſhed, like the ſnow upon their ſummits, and ſwallowed up. The ſea itſelf is gradually conſumed; and the whole exterior frame of the earth is diſſolved in a deluge of fire. But, whilſt all the ſolid parts near the ſurface are thus reduced into a glittering orb of fluid fire; the lighter and more volatile, ſuch as ſmoke, watery vapour, and the earthy particles, which the power of heat is capable of ſupporting, will float in the agitated air, and conſtitute a thick region of darkneſs, encompaſſing the flaming globe.

During the ſpace of ſome years, it will remain a dreadful ſpectacle to the neighbouring planets; an awful monument of the divine wrath againſt diſloyal and diſobedient creatures. At length, however, the flames will

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be extinguiſhed. At length the ſurrounding darkneſs will be diſpelled. For, when the force of fire ceaſes to operate, the particles of earth and air and water, which fill the ſurrounding chaos, will, according to their different degrees of gravity, ſucceſſively deſcend, and arrange themſelves on the ſmooth ſurface of the liquified world. As acceſſions are thus perpetually made to it from all the heights and regions of the air, it will become by degrees firm and immoveable, will be able to ſupport itſelf and a new race of inhabitants, and, being poſſeſſed of all the principles of a fruitful ſoil, as well for the production of animals as of plants, will want no property belonging to an habitable earth. The new orb will be level and regular; and, as the ocean will be ſhut up in its centre, its ſurface will be alike deſtitute of mountains and of ſeas.

Nor will it long remain without inhabitants; for the virtuous of mankind, and the martyrs of Jeſus, and, among others, the patriarchs, the prophets, and the apoſtles, will riſe from the dead, and excluſively enjoy the privileges of a prior reſurrection. The face of nature will be eminently beautiful; and the earth will be endowed with ſpontaneous fertility. The axis of the globe will be parallel to the axis of the Ecliptic; and there will be perpetual ſerenity, and a perpetual ſpring, free from the viciſſitudes of the ſeaſons, and the inconveniences of heat and of cold. The newly created animals will be mild and tractable. The lamb and the kid will aſſociate, on terms of familiar intimacy, with the wolf, the lion, and the leopard, who will retain no thirſt for blood, no fondneſs for prey. The ſons of the firſt reſurrection will poſſeſs bodies ſimilar in ſhape to thoſe, which they had in their former life; but they will be ſuperior to the attacks of diſeaſe. The new creation will be enlightened by the divine preſence in an extraordinary manner. All

evil

evil will be extirpated. All miſchievous paſſions will be extinguiſhed. There will be no marriage; and, as infants will not be born, no part of their time will be occupied in the nurſing of children or in the education of youth. As they will be elevated to a life of uninterrupted freedom and of joyful inactivity, day will glide after day, and year will ſucceed after year, in the alternate fruition of the impaſſioned tranſports of devotion and the calmer pleaſures of contemplation. After having thus enjoyed a thouſand years of the higheſt terreſtrial felicity, the glories of a celeſtial world will dawn upon them; and they will be tranſported through the ſky to meet our Saviour in the clouds, when he comes to viſit the earth a third time, at the period of the final reſurrection and the general judgment.

Without ſtopping to combat the peculiarities of Dr. Burnet's Theory, objections to which will ſpontaneouſly occur in the mind of the intelligent reader, I ſhall proceed to the farther developement of my own expectations and conjectures.

The idea of a millennium, it will perhaps be urged, is irrational, becauſe we are told by different commentators, as by biſhop Newton[4] and Mr. Lowth[5], that, on the arrival of this period, all earthly governments are to terminate. But of the texts, which authoriſe them to draw this concluſion, I am yet to be informed. That the deſtruction of the preſent European governments is predicted, I certainly am not diſpoſed to queſtion: but it ſurely does not, therefore, follow, that there are to be no governments at all. Very different was the opinion of Jurieu. 'All thoſe vain titles,' ſays he, 'which now 'ſerve for ornament and pride, ſhall then be vaniſhed. 'Brotherly love ſhall make all men *equal*; not that all

[4] Vol. I. p. 492. [5] On Dan. VII. 26.

'diſtinction,

'distinction, and all dignities among men, shall cease. 'This kingdom is no anarchy; there shall be some to 'govern, and others to obey. But government shall 'then be without pride and insolence, without tyranny 'and without violence[6].' It is Christianity, says Dr. Maclaine, which 'confirms by positive precepts, encou-'rages by sublime promises, and enjoins, under pain of 'the most tremendous evils, those virtues of piety, can-'dour, gratitude, temperance, and benevolence, that 'strengthen all the bonds of civil government[7].' Mr. Stephens, a diligent student of the apocalypse, long ago observed, that '*the kingdom of Christ* is not contrary to 'governments, powers, and authorities, purely as such; 'but only to governments as idolatrous, as tyrannical, as 'contrary to the laws of Christ[8].' And it will shortly be seen, that there actually are passages in Daniel and in John, which lead us to expect, that governments will continue to exist in the millennium, though administered by persons of a very different character from those, who are at present invested with power.

The whole of the apocalypse may, says a late writer, 'be considered as a number of scenic pictures[9].' Thus the material images, occurring at the entrance of the xxth chapter, are similar to those employed at the close of the xixth. We are there told, that the ten-horned *beast was taken, and with him the false prophet*, and that *these were both cast alive into a lake of fire:* that the overthrow of the antichristian monarchies of Europe is foretold in this, as well as in other passages, has already been seen. But the succeeding verses in ch. xx proceed a

[6] Vol. II. p. 379.

[7] Lett. addressed to S. Jenyns, Esq. on his view of the Intern. Evid. of Chr. p. 123.

[8] Calculation of the Number of the Beast, &c. p. 300.

[9] 'The Revelation is wholly dramatical.' Daubuz, p. 154.

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ſtep farther. Another ſymbolic perſonage, *the dragon*, is there deſcribed, as appearing to St. John in the prophetic viſion, and being *bound* with *a chain*, *till the thouſand years be fulfilled*. Conformably to what was ſtated in ch. vi. [10] and in agreement with its proper ſymbolic import, I obſerve, that *the dragon*, as it cannot here denote the tyranny of the Roman emperors, appears to be put for monarchical deſpotiſm in general.

Now 'to bind,' ſays Dr. Lancaſter, 'is to forbid, or 'to reſtrain from acting.' Therefore *the binding of the dragon for a thouſand* prophetic *years* ſeems manifeſtly to ſignify, that the fury of monarchical tyranny ſhall during that period be reſtrained [11]. The angel of the viſion is deſcribed (v. 1), as having not only *a great chain*, to bind this figurative perſonage, but alſo την κλειδα της αβυσσου, *the key of the ſea*, by means of which the ſymbolic ſea may be ſhut up. 'Our tranſlation,' ſays Daubuz, 'turns the whole thus, *the key of the bottomleſs pit*; but 'αβυσσος ſignifies *always* the deep or great ſea, in oppo-'ſition to little waters or ſeas [12].'

Whilſt it is remarked by this able commentator, that *a key* is an emblem of that which binds and ſhuts up; he declares, in correſpondence with a paſſage formerly cited from him, that αβυσσος, or *the ſea*, is an eſtabliſhed ſymbol for *a ſtate of war*. That a complete ſtop will now be put to this unnatural ſtate of things, is accordingly the interpretation, which he annexes to this clauſe of the prophecy [13].

In the verſe which follows the account of the ſymbolic dragon (v. 4), the prophet ſays, *And I ſaw thrones, and they ſat upon them, and judgment was given unto*

[10] In p. 75—77.

[11] In the ſymbolic diction of prophecy a 'chain ſignifies hindrance from 'action. So. Artemidorus, lib. III. c. 35.' Dr. Lancaſter.

[12] P. 397. [13] See Daubuz, p. 917.

*them: and I ſaw the ſouls of them, that were beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God, and which had not worſhipped the beaſt, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived* [14] *and reigned with Chriſt a thouſand years.*

After obſerving from Dr. Lancaſter, that a *throne* is the ſymbol of government or power, I ſhall again cite the firſt clauſe of the verſe, as tranſlated by Mr. Wakefield: *and I ſaw thrones, to the ſitters on which judgment was given.* 'What can this mean,' ſays Dr. Lightfoot, 'but power and authority to be magiſtrates and judges.[15].' To the ſame purport Mr. Lowman. This 'figurative deſcription ſeems to intimate order and go-'vernment in this kingdom of Chriſt, that ſome were to 'have judgment given unto them, or to be raiſed to the 'authority of magiſtrates in it. This, as all other go-'vernments, was to be made up of governors and go-'verned.' *Judgment was given unto them.* 'By *judg-'ment*,' ſays Vitringa, 'here without doubt is under-'ſtood the office and dignity of a judge. John hath imi-'tated the expreſſion of Daniel, who ſays, *the judgment 'ſat*[16]: i. e. judges were inveſted with the power of 'pronouncing ſentence, and adorned with the dignity 'and office of judges.—But *judgment* involves and car-'ries with it the idea of government, as De Launay has 'very well obſerved on this place; for *to judge* in the 'ſtyle of the Old Teſtament is *to govern*.' Who the perſons are, who hereafter ſhall govern, is not, however, ſtated by St. John; and the reaſon is this, ſays Vitringa: he expected, that his readers would compare what he ſays with the parallel place in Daniel, from

[14] Mr. Wakefield tranſlates, *and they came to life.*

[15] Vol. II. p. 1058. [16] VII. 10.

whom

whom we learn, that government will at length be adminiſtered by men of religion and of probity.

The parallel places occur in ch. vii. Some of them have already been brought forward, and ſhall not be repeated; but verſes 18 and 22 have not yet been alleged. That *the ſaints of the moſt High ſhall take the kingdom, and poſſeſs the kingdom for ever*, is the declaration of Daniel in v. 18; and in v. 22 he ſays, *judgment was given to the ſaints of the moſt High; and the time came, that the ſaints poſſeſſed the kingdom.* Still more perſpicuous is v. 27, where it is ſaid, that DOMINION *ſhall be given unto the people of the ſaints of the moſt High.* At length Europe, and afterwards the world at large, will be governed and inhabited by men of pure morals and uncorrupted Chriſtianity. Such at leaſt will be the character of a decided majority. To theſe paſſages of Daniel St. Paul, ſays Vitringa, manifeſtly refers, where he ſays, *do ye not know that the ſaints ſhall judge the world*[17]. That is, ſays Dr. Lightfoot, 'know ye not, 'that there ſhall be a Chriſtian magiſtracy.' This is probably the true interpretation: but what particular period, and what deſcription of perſons, does the reader conceive, the doctor regards as here deſignated by the apoſtle?—The princes and other men in power, who have plundered, or governed, the European world for theſe laſt fourteen or fifteen centuries[18]!

In

[17] I. Cor. VI. 2.

[18] See Lightfoot's Works, vol. II. p. 1058. This is from a complementary ſermon preached at the Hertford-Aſſizes. A paſſage or two from it may not be unentertaining. 'And now, my Lords and Gentlemen, 'you may ſee your own picture in the glaſs of the text; for you are of 'the number of thoſe of whom it ſpeaketh. In it, you may ſee yourſelves, 'imbenched, commiſſioned, and your work put into your hands.' A little farther he aſks, 'what ſober man does or can deny, kingſhip and 'magiſtracy to be of *Chriſt's ordaining*;' but he diſcreetly declares himſelf

In the xith chapter of the apocalypſe we peruſe the account of the figurative reſurrection of the inhabitants belonging to *the Tenth Part of the* ſymbolic *city*. In ch. xx. we read of the reſurrection of thoſe, who had been oppreſſed and perſecuted by the beaſt [19], which deſcription differs from the other, in being of a general kind, and unreſtricted to any particular country. That this alſo is figurative, Dr. Whitby has largely, and, in my opinion, deciſively proved. I repeat the words of St. John, *And I ſaw the ſouls of them that were beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God, and which had not worſhipped the beaſt, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Chriſt* A THOUSAND YEARS.

It has, ſays Mr. Lowman, been correctly obſerved, 'that all theſe expreſſions may very well be underſtood 'in a figurative ſenſe. *The ſouls of them, which were*

unwilling, 'to undervalue the judgment of any in the congregation ſo 'far, as to think, this great and important truth needs any *proof*, to him.' In his catalogue of the principal goſpel-mercies, he accordingly omits not to inſert Chriſtian kings and rulers: and, in evidence of the fact, appeals to that patriotic prince and pious Chriſtian, Charles II; who accordingly, with exquiſite propriety, has been recently placed (in a well-executed ſtatue), in the centre of the Royal Exchange, as at once an apt ſpecimen of the paſt kings of England, and an exemplary model for their future imitation. 'We need not,' ſays Dr. Lightfoot, 'go far for 'proof of this.—The univerſal joy and acclamations of all the nation, 'upon the happy reſtoring of his ſacred majeſty, ſpeaks the ſenſe and at-'teſtation of the whole nation, nay of the three nations, unto the truth, 'and their ſenſibleneſs of this mercy. The ſhout of a king, of a moſt 'chriſtian king, was among them.' But, in juſtice to this celebrated rabbinical doctor, it ſhould be obſerved, that this diſcourſe was preached in 1660, the year of Charles's elevation to the throne.

[19] Johnſton of Holywood, ſpeaking of theſe two paſſages, and againſt the literal reſurrection of the martyrs, aſks, whether it is 'not contrary 'to all the rules of juſt criticiſm, to underſtand two ſimilar deſcriptions 'in the ſame book, in oppoſite, or even not in ſimilar ſenſes?'

'*beheaded*

'*beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus*, and which had not '*worſhipped the beaſt*, may eaſily, according to the man-'ner of prophetic language, ſignify perſons of like ſpi-'rit and temper with them, of like faith, patience, con-'ſtancy, and zeal.—It is a very eaſy and natural figure, 'as well as very common in this book of prophecy, to 'deſcribe perſons by the names of ſuch, whoſe tempers 'and characters they imitate and follow. Thus the names 'of *Sodom*, *Egypt*, and *Babylon*, are ſo often aſcribed 'to Rome, on account ſhe nearly reſembled them in cor-'ruption, pride, and cruelty.' 'The true meaning of 'this ſymbolical repreſentation,' ſays Dr. Johnſton of Holywood, 'is this: at that period, the world ſhall be 'peopled with men of the ſame ſpirit and character, with 'the real martyrs of Chriſt; with men, who, like them, 'ſhall call no man on earth maſter in matters of religion; 'who, free from the fetters of ſuperſtition and idolatry, 'and regarding the ſacred rights of conſcience, ſhall re-'gulate their faith, worſhip, and conduct, by the infal-'lible ſtandard of the word of God. Men of this cha-'racter ſhall in ſucceſſion live on earth, and enjoy a 'ſtate of great purity and joy.' The martyrs may alſo be ſaid to live and reign with Chriſt, 'on account of the 'very high but unſuperſtitious reſpect, which the in-'habitants of that age ſhall pay to their memories, and 'the warm gratitude, which they ſhall feel for thoſe good 'and undaunted men, who, adhering to the teſtimony 'of Jeſus and the word of God, at the expence of their 'fame, fortunes, liberty and lives, were the intelligent 'and voluntary inſtruments, in the hand of God, of 'tranſmitting to them—that divine religion, which they 'enjoy in ſuch purity, peace, and plenty.' With re-ſpect to the prophet's expreſſion, ſays Mr. Lowman, that they ſhall *reign with Chriſt*, it 'may well be underſtood 'in a figurative ſenſe, as we are ſaid to be *crucified with*

'*Chriſt*, and *to live with him*; or as Chriſt himſelf is 'ſaid to *live in us*, Gal. ii. 20.'

Without citing any more paſſages from the xxth chapter of the apocalypſe, or alleging any more extracts illuſtrative of the words which were laſt quoted, I ſhall refer thoſe, who may be diſpoſed minutely to examine this part of the prophecy, to Lowman and Johnſton, to Brenius[20], Vitringa, and Whitby, whoſe opinions on the figurative import of this prediction coincide, and are expreſſed at conſiderable length: and I ſhall here only add what has already been ſtated[21], that a ſymbolic reſurrection, according to the Old Teſtament, and to the Oriental Oneirocritics, 'ſignifies a recovery of ſuch 'rights and liberties as have been taken away[22].'

From the xxth chapter of the apocalypſe, I paſs on to the firſt verſe of the ſucceeding chapter, which contains ſymbols of a well-known import, and is thus expreſſed: *And I ſaw a new heaven and a new earth:* for *the firſt heaven and the firſt earth were paſſed away*; *and there was no more ſea*[23].

Previouſly to entering into an inquiry on the ſignification of the ſeveral ſymbols, we are ſtruck with *the general air* of this paſſage as expreſſive and beautiful. A remark of the celebrated Crellius upon it may with this view be quoted. 'If,' ſays he, 'after the moſt ſevere

[20] In Apoc. and in his treatiſe *De Regno Eccl. Glor.* P. 1. c. 10.

[21] See p. 121—123.

[22] Dr. Lancaſter. Mat. Henry, in agreement with this, ſays, that the 4th verſe of the xxth ch. of the apocalypſe, if figuratively interpreted, ſignifies, 'they were in a civil and political ſenſe dead, and had a political 'reſurrection; their liberties and privileges were revived and reſtored.'

[23] That this paſſage is to be figuratively underſtood, and applied to the future ſtate of the world, has long been a received opinion. Among other early writers, who maintained it, and who might be ſpecified, were Joachim of Calabria in the twelfth, and Ubertinus in the fourteenth, century.

'ſervitude,

'ſervitude, by which the human race has been op-
'preſſed, golden liberty ſhould follow; if, after the
'thickeſt darkneſs of ignorance, the cleareſt light of
'truth ſhould ariſe; if, after a mighty conteſt, and cala-
'mities not to be calculated, great joy and a moſt happy
'ſtate of mankind ſhould ſucceed; then the face of all
'things will appear changed, and, whilſt before they
'ſeemed to mourn, they will afterwards appear to ſmile,
'ſo that *the heaven and the earth* will ſeem to have un-
'dergone a change, and to have aſſumed a different
'countenance[24].'

'*The earth*,' it has been obſerved, (I am quoting the words of Sir Iſaac Newton) ſignifies 'the inferior peo-
'ple[25];' and the reaſon, as aſſigned by Dr. Lancaſter, is this, 'In the ſymbolical language, the natural world
'repreſents the political: the heaven, ſun, and lumi-
'naries, repreſent the governing part, and conſequently
'*the earth* muſt repreſent the part governed, ſubmitting,
'and inferior.' Of this paſſage the meaning is plain and unequivocal. *The old heaven*, the old governments, are removed away; and, what is the natural conſe-quence of this, the old earth alſo paſſes away, i. e. the great body of the people, which were involved in ignorance, penury, and wretchedneſs, are gradually changed, and, at length, ſucceeded by thoſe of a far different character[26]. And as the latter change *cannot* be accompliſhed without a wiſe ſyſtem of education be-

[24] Crellii Opera, 1656, vol. II. p. 373.

[25] P. 16. See the ſame obſervation in Mede, p. 761; and in Vitringa in Apoc. VI. 14.

[26] That *the earth* is a ſymbol, having two ſignifications, has before been remarked. The ſordid and antichriſtian part of mankind it ſometimes ſignifies. Which of theſe meanings is to be choſen, the context, therefore, muſt, in every caſe, determine. However, at the period ſpoken of in this paſſage, the ſymbolic earth will paſs away in both ſenſes.

ing adopted, this is neceſſarily preſuppoſed. So clear does the meaning of this intereſting verſe appear to be, that I ſhall, perhaps, be charged with the unneceſſary introduction of the following quotation. It is, however, from a writer of very high authority. 'The *old heaven* 'and *earth*,' ſays Daubuz, 'are removed to make way 'to a *new heaven* and *new earth*, that is, to a NEW GO-'VERNMENT[27] and a NEW PEOPLE[28], as we have 'ſhewn before theſe ſymbols ſignify. Now I ſay, that 'the removal of the *old heaven* and *earth*, and the intro-'duction of the *new heaven* and *earth*, are ſymbols of a 'prophecy, which has not its accompliſhment in a ſud-'den revolution, or moment, but in progreſs of time.—'When the Holy Ghoſt repreſents any thing by ſome 'ſingle and entire ſign or ſymbol, it is moſt uſual and 'proper to do it in its full extent and entire ſettlement. 'So that this does not *exclude* the beginnings thereof, 'whilſt it ſeems not perfect, but *ſuppoſes* them.' Does there not, then, ſeem reaſon to conclude, that the Revolution in the northern continent of America is a beginning of the *new* ſymbolic *heaven* and the *new* ſymbolic *earth*; and that that of France, when it ſhall riſe ſuperior to the intrigues and turbulence of domeſtic factions, and produce its genuine effects, under the mild influence of peace, and amid the conſciouſneſs of national ſecurity, will, at length, deſerve to be viewed in

[27] That the reader may be the more certain of this interpretation, I refer him to the following paſſages in the book of Revelation, where the word *heaven* occurs, to ch. VI. 13, 14; VIII. 10; IX. 1; XI. 12; XII. 1, 4, 7, 8; XIII. 13; XVI. 21; and XIX. 17. That in all theſe places it has a ſymbolic and political ſenſe, and refers to the government in the ſtate, may be ſeen in Daubuz. This, indeed, through the ancient world, was the eſtabliſhed acceptation of this ſymbol; and this is the import annexed to it in the Oriental oneirocritics.

[28] The words of Iſaiah, *and the earth ſhall remove out of her place*, cited in p. 446 and 448, have a ſimilar import.

the

the ſame favourable light? Faint is the dawn, which uſhers in the day, and often deformed by denſe and widely extended miſts. So alſo, in almoſt every human good, of a complicate and extenſive kind, the beginnings are neceſſarily defective, and often clouded by a large mixture of evil. They do not, however, on that account, ceaſe to be highly valuable; and to him, who turns his eye from the preſent ſcene of momentary good or evil, and traces effects from their cauſes, they do not, on that account, ceaſe to be a ground of congratulation and rejoicing.

But I return to Daubuz. '*And there was no more ſea.* 'The ſea[29], as has been frequently obſerved before, ſig-'nifies multitudes in commotion and war.—Thus this 'ſymbol ſignifies here, that in this *new heaven* and *earth*, 'or *kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt* now completed, there ſhall 'be no tyranny, oppreſſion, violence, war, ſhedding 'of blood, or any other turbulent wickedneſs.'

The predictions of the Jewiſh and the Chriſtian prophets mutually illuſtrate each other. Leaving, therefore, for the preſent, thoſe which occur in the book of revelation, I ſhall paſs on to ſome of thoſe, which are found in the Old Teſtament, and delineate in perſpicuous or in glowing language the ſame happy period.

From the concluding chapter of Joel a paſſage has already been quoted[30], in which it is foretold, that the ſymbolic *ſun*, and *moon*, and *ſtars* ſhall be darkened; and I now give a part of the verſe which follows, as explained by Dr. Wells. '*And it ſhall come to paſs in*

[29] The expreſſion is plainly ſymbolic: and, not to mention the extreme improbability of *the ſea* in a literal ſenſe being annihilated, or diſappearing, at the commencement of the millennium, we read of it (XX. 13) as long afterwards exiſting, even at the Day of Judgment, and as then *giving up the dead which were in it.*

[30] See p. 302, 303, 583, 584.

'*that*

'*that day*, or during the happy ſtate of the millennium, 'the ſaints on earth ſhall enjoy the greateſt plenty of all 'things requiſite to this life, inſomuch *that* the vines 'even on the mountains ſhall yield ſuch plenty of wine 'yearly, that it may be ſaid, *the mountains ſhall* in a 'manner *drop down new wine* yearly, and the cattle that 'feed even on the hills ſhall give ſo much milk, that it 'may be ſaid that *the hills flow with milk*[31].' To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks Mr. Lowth.

In a ſimilar ſtrain is one of the concluding verſes of the prophet Amos, which verſes, ſays Mr. Lowth, 'ought to be underſtood of the happy ſtate of the mil-'lennium.' *Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that the plowman ſhall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that ſoweth ſeed; and the mountains ſhall drop ſweet wine, and all the hills ſhall melt*[32]. Here alſo I cite the paraphraſe of Dr. Wells. '*Behold the days* 'of the millennium or reign of Chriſt and his ſaints on 'earth *come, ſaith the Lord*, when there ſhall be ſuch 'plenty, *that the plowman ſhall overtake the reaper*, i. e. 'they ſhall not get in all their harveſt, till juſt before 'it be time to plow again for the next year; *and the* 'treader of grapes him that ſoweth ſeed, i. e. by the time 'they have ſown the winter corn ſeed, their vintage 'ſhall be ready: *and the mountains ſhall drop ſweet* 'wine, *and all the hills ſhall melt*[33], or flow with milk.'

Lactantius, having theſe paſſages among others in his eye, and interpreting them according to the letter, ſays, 'the earth will open its fertility, and produce fruits ſpon-'taneouſly and in the greateſt abundance; the rocks of

[31] III. 18. [32] IX. 13.

[33] This word is, however, ſuſceptible of a different interpretation. 'The Chaldee Paraphraſe, the Septuagint, and Vulgar Latin, underſtand 'the Hebrew verb, tranſlated *melt*, of being cultivated, the ſtony ground 'being made ſofter by plowing and manuring.' Mr. Lowth.

'the

'the mountains will ſweat with honey; wines will run 'down in rivulets; and the rivers will flow with milk. 'In ſhort, the world itſelf will rejoice, and the whole face 'of nature be glad.—Lions and calves will ſtand together 'at the ſtall: the wolf will not ſeize upon the ſheep, nor 'the dog follow the chace: hawks and eagles will be-'come harmleſs, and the infant will play with the ſer-'pent[34].' The rhetorician of Nicomedia, having uttered theſe and ſimilar expectations, then quotes thoſe exquiſite lines of the Roman poet, which follow, as if impreſſed with the belief of their future literal accompliſhment.

Cedet et ipſe mari vector; nec nautica pinus
Mutabit merces; omnis feret omnia tellus.
Non raſtros patietur humus, non vinea falcem.
Robuſtus quoque jam tauris juga ſolvet arator.
Tunc etiam molli flaveſcet campus ariſta;
Incultiſque rubens pendebit ſentibus uva;
Et duræ quercus ſudabunt roſcida mella.
Nec varios diſcet mentiri lana colores;
Ipſe ſed in pratis aries jam ſuave rubenti
Murice, jam croceo mutabit vellera luto.
Sponte ſua ſandyx paſcentes veſtiet agnos.
Ipſæ lacte domum referent diſtenta capellæ
Ubera; nec magnos metuent armenta leones.

Though the reader is doubtleſs of opinion, that Lactantius has wandered ſufficiently far from probability; yet he will ſoon ſee, that, upon this very ſubject, and by an earlier writer, he has been far out-ſtripped in the marvellous. Irenæus aſſures us, that 'the days ſhall come, 'in which there will be vines, each bearing ten thouſand 'branches; and on every one of theſe branches there 'will be ten thouſand leſſer branches; and on every

[34] Lib. VII, c. 24.

'one

'one of theſe ten thouſand twigs; and on every one of 'theſe twigs ten thouſand cluſters of grapes; and on 'each ſeparate cluſter ten thouſand grapes; and every 'one of theſe grapes, when preſſed, will yield twenty 'five metretæ[35] of wine. And when any one ſhall take 'hold of one of theſe ſacred boughs, another will cry out, 'I am a better bunch, take me, by my means bleſs the 'Lord[36].'

But, though there is no reaſon for believing, that plants and fruit-trees will become ſupernaturally prolific; yet it may juſtly be expected, that the arts of agriculture and gardening will be improved beyond the conception of preſent times; and that, in conſequence, all the more valuable productions of the vegetable world will ſurpaſs ſuch as are now cultivated, with reſpect to beauty or flavour, ſize or quantity.

By Micah alſo the arrival of this happy period is foretold. *In the laſt days it ſhall come to paſs*, ſays the prophet, that the ſtrong nations *ſhall beat their ſwords into plowſhares, and their ſpears into pruning-hooks: nation ſhall not lift up a ſword againſt nation, neither ſhall they learn war any more. But they ſhall ſit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none ſhall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of Hoſts hath ſpoken it*[37]. Were there no prediction at all in the prophets of the deſtruction of the antichriſtian monarchies that now exiſt, from this ſingle paſſage of Micah it might, I think, ſafely be inferred. Whilſt they ſubſiſt, is it poſſible, that wars ſhould ceaſe throughout the world?

That tranquility and ſecurity, that mildneſs, humanity, and concord, which will hereafter flow from the amended

[35] That is, ſays Dr. Whitby (on the Miſſ. ch. I.), according to the moſt moderate computation, 275 gallons.

[36] Lib. V. c. 33.

[37] IV, 1, 3, 4.

morals

morals of mankind, are beautifully repreſented by the evangelical prophet, when he ſays (xi, 6), that *the wolf ſhall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard ſhall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child ſhall lead them*[38]. Leſt any one, ſays Vitringa, ſhould ſtupidly annex to this a literal acceptation, the prophet has himſelf ſupplied us with a key for interpreting it[39], adding immediately after in v. 9. *They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain*[40]; *for the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea.*

The lxvth chapter alſo of Iſaiah relates not only to the future improved ſtate of the Jewiſh nation, but alſo to the millennium[41] and the ſtate of the world in general. That the concluſion of it paints in the moſt beautiful and in the ſtrongeſt colours the felicity of future times, and their exemption from deſpotiſm and from war, the following extracts from that part of the chapter will ſhew. *Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former ones they ſhall not remember, nor ſhall they come into their minds any more: but they ſhall rejoice and exult in the age to come, which I create.—No more ſhall there be an infant ſhort-lived; nor an old man who ſhall not have fulfilled his days: for he, who ſhall die at a hundred years, ſhall die a boy; and the ſinner, who ſhall die at a hundred years, ſhall be deemed accurſed. And they ſhall build houſes, and ſhall inhabit them: and they ſhall plant vineyards, and ſhall eat the fruits of them. They ſhall not build, and another inhabit; they ſhall not*

[38] Among the early commentators, who have obſerved that theſe words are to be figuratively underſtood, are Grotius, Munſterus, and Forerius.

[39] See the ſame obſervation in Mr. Lowth in loc.

[40] 'That is', ſays Dr. Lancaſter, 'in all the kingdom of the Meſſiah, 'which ſhall then reach all over the world.'

[41] See this obſerved by Mr. Lowth, Mat. Henry, Dr. Wells, and Vitringa.

*plant,*

*plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree, ſhall be the days of my people: and they ſhall wear out the works of their own hands. My choſen ſhall not labour in vain; nor ſhall they generate a ſhort-lived race.—The wolf and the lamb ſhall feed together; and the lion ſhall eat ſtraw as the ox: but, as for the ſerpent, duſt ſhall be his food. They ſhall not hurt, nor ſhall they deſtroy in all my holy mountain, ſaith Jehovah*[42].

A few obſervations, illuſtrative of this important paſſage, it will be proper to add.

As the prophet employs the word *choſen*, it may not be inexpedient to introduce the following extract from Mr. Taylor of Norwich. 'The ſtate, memberſhip, 'privileges, honours, and relations, of profeſſed Chriſ-'tians, particularly of believing Gentiles, are expreſſed 'by the ſame phraſes with thoſe of the ancient Jewiſh 'church; and, therefore, unleſs we admit a very ſtrange 'abuſe of words, muſt convey the ſame general ideas of 'our preſent ſtate, memberſhip, privileges, honours, 'and relations to God, as we are profeſſed Chriſtians. 'For inſtance, as God *choſe* his ancient people the Jews, 'and they were his *choſen* and *elect*; ſo now the whole 'body of Chriſtians, Gentiles as well as Jews, are ad-'mitted to the ſame honour; as they are ſelected from 'the reſt of the world, and taken into the kingdom of 'God, for the knowledge, worſhip, and obedience of 'God, in hopes of eternal life[43].'

As

[42] LXV. 17, 18, 20, 22, 21, 23, 25. This is from Mr. Dodſon's amended Tranſlation of Iſaiah, which, in theſe verſes, varies but little from that of bp. Lowth.

[43] Among other ſimilar paſſages, which Mr. Taylor cites as illuſtrative of the aſſertion in the text, are the following. 'Rom. VIII, 33, *Who ſhall 'lay any thing to the charge of God's* ELECT? Eph. I. 4, *According as he 'hath* CHOSEN *us* (Gentiles, chap. II. 11) *in him before the foundation of 'the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love.* Col. 'III. 12, *Put on, therefore, as the* ELECT *of God, holy and beloved, bowels 'of*

As this world will ſtill be a ſtate of trial, it will conſequently be ſtill chequered with ſome ſhades of vice and ſome remains of infelicity. Accordingly Iſaiah ſays, *and the ſinner, who ſhall die at a hundred years, ſhall be deemed accurſed.*

Dr. John Edwards, a learned divine of the Engliſh church, after declaring, that it 'is not to be doubted of, 'that there ſhall be bodily ſtrength and vigour, in an un-'uſual degree', to thoſe who live in the millenniary period, adds, 'the people of thoſe times ſhall be long-'lived: which I gather from Iſai. lxv. 20. *There ſhall* '*be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man* '*that hath not filled his days*[44].' That is, ſays Mr. Lowth, 'from *thence*, or *from that time*, there ſhall be 'no untimely deaths, either of infants who are abortive, 'or never grow up to man's eſtate; or of old men who 'do not live out the full term of life[45].' This propoſition, it appears reaſonable to underſtand, as being a general one, and liable to exceptions; for, though premature deaths may hereafter be of rare occurrence, the law of our nature forbids that they ſhould not ſometimes happen.

The clauſe, which occurs in the ſubſequent part of the ſame verſe, does, however, when viewed through the medium of our common tranſlation, ſtrongly countenance the idea, that this law *will* be ſuſpended, and that the human frame will hereafter be differently conſtituted. But this medium is, I apprehend, falſe and

'*of mercies*, 2. Thes. II. 13. *But we are bound to give thanks to God always* '*for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning* 'CHOSEN *you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the ſpirit, and belief of* '*the truth* Tit. I. 1. *Paul, a ſervant of God, and an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt,* '*according to the faith of God's* ELECT.' Taylor on the Romans, Intr. p. 31.

[44] *Hiſt. of all the Diſpens. of Relig.* vol. II. p. 743.

[45] See the ſame obſervation in Dr. Wells.

fallacious.

fallacious. That *the child ſhall die an hundred years old*[46], is the incoherent language of the prophet, according to that verſion. That *he, who ſhall die at a hundred years, ſhall die a boy*, is the improved tranſlation of Mr. Dodſon[47]. But the words, I conceive, ſhould have been rendered, *he, who ſhall die at a hundred years, ſhall die a young man*[48]; and the meaning is, ſo great will be the age to which men will frequently attain in the millenniary period, that he, who dies at a hundred years old, will be regarded but as a perſon arrived at maturity[49]. The expreſſions of the Jewiſh prophets, it may here be remarked, are not always to be underſtood in their ſtrict and literal ſenſe. Thus the prediction in the concluding verſe of the preſent chapter, that *the wolf and the lamb ſhall feed together*, that *the lion ſhall eat ſtraw as the ox*, and that, *as for the ſerpent, duſt ſhall*

[46] The following is a method of evading the difficulty, but it is not ſatisfactory. 'Some,' ſays Mat. Henry, 'underſtand it of children, that 'in their childhood are ſo eminent for wiſdom and grace, and by death 'nipped in their bloſſom, that they may be ſaid to *die a hundred years old*.' More rational is the explanation of Vatablus. The expreſſion is an hyperbole, and it ſignifies, that mankind ſhall live very long.

[47] Similar is biſhop Lowth's tranſlation. *For he, that dieth at an hundred years, ſhall die a boy.*

[48] That the Hebrew word, which occurs in this place, may be tranſlated *a young man*, can admit of no doubt. It is ſo tranſlated, in our common verſion, in ch. XIII of Iſaiah, v. 18, in ch. II of Zachariah, v. 4, and in various other books of the Old Teſtament. To the two ſpies, who were ſent by Joſhua into Jericho, this word is applied (Joſh. VI. 23); and it is given as a denomination of the patriarch Joſeph, at a time when he was 28 years of age (Gen. XLI. 12). The ſame Hebrew word, in the XIXth ch. of the book of Judges, when in the feminine gender, is uſed ſix times as the appellation of a woman, who was a concubine; and (Ruth. II. 5.) it is annexed to the name of Ruth, who had been married at leaſt ten years, and at the period ſpoken of was a widow.

[49] Should the work, alluded to in the advertiſement, be publiſhed, I ſhall there enter with ſome minuteneſs into the cauſes, which, it may be expected, will hereafter be productive of great health and uncommon longevity.

*be*

*be his food*, is explained by the ableſt commentators with ſome latitude of interpretation. The words are neither ſuſceptible of a literal explication, nor do they, ſeparately conſidered, contain any preciſe ſymbolic ſignification. They are exactly of the ſame import as a parallel paſſage in the xith chapter of the evangelical prophet, which has been recently cited.

The longevity of thoſe, who are to live in the millenniary period, is in two other verſes alluded to. They *ſhall not*, it is ſaid, *generate a ſhort-lived race*, but their *days* ſhall reſemble *the days of a tree*. And this important circumſtance, the reader will ſhortly ſee, has been declared to be the language of prophecy, by thoſe who have commented on the book of Revelation, as well as by thoſe who have illuſtrated Iſaiah.

Of the induſtrious part of mankind, at preſent, only a ſmall part receive an adequate and reaſonable compenſation for their labours. In rewarding the exertions of ingenuity or of diligence, no laws of proportion are obſerved, no rules of equity are attended to. In this reſpect, ſociety will gradually aſſume a new aſpect. Thoſe of whom the prophet ſpeaks are *not* to *labour in vain*, but they are to *wear out the works of their own hands*. Thoſe who *build*, and thoſe who *plant*, are alike to enjoy the benefit of their own induſtry. Mankind will mutually labour for each other's benefit, and to ſupply each other's wants. No longer will a decided majority of them, as is now the caſe in almoſt all the civilized countries of the globe, lead a life at once of indigence and of toil; whilſt a few individuals, in every diſtrict, riot in luxury and in ſplendor, and, with ſyſtematic prodigality, conſume upon themſelves or their families the labours of hundreds and of thouſands.

After having introduced remarks on the xxth and xxiſt chapters of the apocalypſe, I ſhall now go back

to ch. vii. Nor need the reader wonder at this; for it has already been ſtated, and Mr. Mede has proved it beyond all controverſy, that the apocalypſe contains a number of contemporaneous predictions. And it is the obſervation of bp. Newton, that the latter part of it, compriſing the eleven laſt chapters, 'is deſigned as a ſupple-'ment to the former, to complete what was deficient, to 'explain what was dubious, to illuſtrate what was ob-'ſcure[50].'

The complete overthrow of all antichriſtian rule and authority the prophet had deſcribed at the cloſe of ch. vi. in his account of the ſixth ſeal. It is, therefore, very natural, and conformable to the method of all the prophets, that, in the following chapter, he ſhould paſs on to the deſcription of the ſubſequent ſtate of the world and of the church. The repreſentation which he there gives is figurative throughout, in a high degree ſublime, and is ſtrongly expreſſive of the great holineſs and felicity, which will hereafter prevail.

*After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, ſtood before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.—And one of the elders anſwered*[51], *ſaying unto me, what are theſe which are arrayed in white robes?*

[50] Vol. III. p. 188.

[51] It is the remark of Beza on this verſe, that 'he who begins ſpeaking 'is, in the Evangeliſts, often in this manner ſaid αποκρινεσθαι.' But ſince the verb *to anſwer* has no ſuch acceptation in Engliſh, to ſay that one of the elders *anſwered*, though what follows is not a reply to any queſtion, is a tranſlation, manifeſtly aukward, and calculated to embarraſs the unlearned reader. That αποκρινεσθαι in various places of the New Teſtament, ſignifies ſimply *to ſpeak*, or *to begin to ſpeak*, is a point on which the critics are agreed. The words in the Greek are, και απεκριθη εις εκ των πρεσβυτερων, λεγων μοι. Beza's tranſlation is, *tum me compellavit unus ex illis ſenioribus, dicens mihi*; that of Mr. Wakefield's, like Caſtalio's, is more brief, *and one of the elders ſaid unto me*. Among the places which call for a like alteration are Mat. XI. 25, and XXVIII. 5.

And

*And whence came they? And I ſaid unto him, Sir, thou knoweſt. And he ſaid unto me, theſe are they which came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his temple: and he that ſitteth on the throne ſhall dwell among them. They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more; neither ſhall the ſun light on them, nor any heat*[52]. Bp. Newton, in agreement with his explication of the fifth ſeal which has already been noticed, found himſelf under the neceſſity of declaring, that this 'is a deſcription of the ſtate of the church in Conſtantine's time, of the peace and protection it ſhould enjoy under the civil powers, and of the great acceſſion that ſhould be made to it both of Jews and Gentiles.' That it is to be underſtood of a ſtate of things in this world, I am perfectly ready to admit; and acknowledge the force of Vitringa's obſervation, that we are admoniſhed of this, becauſe the expreſſions employed here are perfectly ſimilar to thoſe, by which the Hebrew prophets had formerly painted the future condition of the Chriſtian church[53]. But no paſt period of time correſponds

[52] V. 9, 13—16.

[53] See this argument enforced, and paſſages from the Hebrew prophets and the apocalypſe contraſted together in oppoſite columns, by Mr. Taylor of Portſmouth, in his *Thoughts on the Grand Apoſtacy*, p. 195—205. As ſome perſons, however, from the loftineſs of the language, may poſſibly be diſpoſed to doubt, whether the paſſage is not rather applicable to heaven than to earth; I will, for their ſatisfaction, enumerate ſome of the moſt eminent of the commentators, who have conceived it to be deſcriptive of the ſtate of mankind in the latter. Such are Grotius and Hammond, Mede, More, and Vitringa; Goodwin (p. 55), Whiſton, and Jurieu, Pyle, Daubuz, and Sir I. Newton (p. 313). But if I am aſked, whether there be no paſſage in the book of Revelation, indiſputably announcing a future judgment or a future ſtate, I appeal to the following verſes (v. 13 and 14) in ch. XX. *And I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life:*

reſponds to the lofty ſymbols of the apoſtle. To the *fourth* century, when the foundation of every future corruption was laid, they are doubtleſs inapplicable. Surely the prelate's adaptation of the prophetic emblems is altogether forced and unnatural; and, conceiving it to be the neceſſary conſequence of his interpretation of the ſixth ſeal, I cannot but regard it as a very ſtrong argument againſt that interpretation, in addition to thoſe by which it has already been combated.

To prove that the paſſage under conſideration cannot relate to the time of Conſtantine, I will quote a paſſage from the biſhop of Briſtol's own work againſt himſelf. 'After Conſtantine, the church,' ſays the prelate rather unguardedly in another place, 'was ſoon ſhaken and 'diſturbed by hereſies and ſchiſms, by the incurſions and 'devaſtations of the northern nations, by the conquering arms and prevailing impoſture of the Saracens and 'afterwards of the Turks, by the corruption, idolatry, 'and wickedneſs, the uſurpation, tyranny, and cruelty, of the church of Rome[54].' Yet, notwithſtanding all this, the learned prelate heſitates not to maintain, that in the time of Conſtantine commenced that happy period, ſpoken of by the prophet, when the Chriſtian church, conſiſting of men *of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more; neither ſhall the ſun light on them nor any heat,* but *God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

That this prophecy refers to the period, which will ſucceed the downfal of antichriſt, is ſo obvious, that the

*life: and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the ſea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell* (that is, the grave) *gave up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

[54] Vol. III. p. 316.

opinion

opinion has obtained not only the ſuffrage of many learned moderns; but may claim the ſanction of the moſt remote antiquity. It may be found in the writings of that celebrated African Father, Tertullian, who flouriſhed at the concluſion of the ſecond century[55].

That vaſt aſſemblage of perſons, of whom the prophet has drawn this ſymbolic picture, appear *arrayed in robes*, which have been *waſhed*, and are of a pure *white*. *Palms* alſo they have *in their hands*. Now 'a garment,' ſays Vitringa, 'is the ſymbol of the condition or ſtate in 'which any one is.' The prieſts who ſacrificed, as well among the Pagans as the Jews, were clothed in white. 'Hence,' ſays Dr. Lancaſter, '*white garments*, as be-'ing worn upon ſolemn feſtivals, were the tokens of 'joy and pleaſure; as in Eccl. IX. 8;—*to be clothed in* '*white* ſignifies in the prophetic ſtyle to be proſperous, 'and ſucceſsful, and victorious;' and '*to put on clean* '*garments after waſhing* ſignifies freedom from oppreſ-'ſion, care, and evil, together with honour and joy.' Civil liberty, and religious freedom, at length attain an univerſal prevalence; and the great body of Chriſtians are emancipated from the ſhackles of uſurped authority and from the preſſure of perſecuting laws. From Dr. Lancaſter it may alſo be added, that '*branches of palm* '*trees* are the ſymbol of joy after a victory, attended 'with antecedent ſufferings;' and that '*hunger* and *thirſt* 'are the ſymbols of affliction.' Great had been the ſufferings of genuine Chriſtians and of the true friends of mankind; but, at length, they are every where victorious over their enemies.

They ſhall, it is ſaid, *ſerve God in his temple*, i. e. ſays Vitringa, 'in the communion of the true church[56].'

[55] Scorpiace, adverſus Gnoſticos, c. XII.

[56] To the ſame purpoſe Dr. More ſays, '*the temple* ſignifies the church 'in its pure condition.' *Myſt. of Godlineſs*, p. 190.

On the clauſe, occurring in the next verſe, *neither ſhall the ſun light on them, nor any heat*, two or three ſuggeſtions may be propoſed. Brief as it is, but containing a well known ſymbol[57], does it not directly intimate, that the monarchies of the world, as ſuch, are far from having a ſalutary operation; that, inſtead of ſhining with a friendly warmth, they burn with a pernicious heat? Will it not by ſome be thought to imply, that the deliverance of mankind from regal oppreſſion is one of the prime benefits, which they will enjoy in the millenniary ſtate? Since it declares, that no *heat* ſhall *light* upon *them*, perhaps too it may be pronounced to be of a yet larger ſignification; and to contain an aſſurance, that neither monarchs will continue to be a bane to human happineſs, nor any other deſcription of men whatever will be armed with a degree of authority, detrimental to the true intereſt of ſociety.

Immediately after this animating deſcription of the meliorated condition of mankind, which is repreſented as already commenced at the cloſe of the ſixth ſeal, the ſeventh ſeal is opened[58], a period of great length, but of which the prophet has not defined the extent. That the world will remain in the ſame happy ſtate of undiſturbed tranquillity during the whole of that time, is the great truth which is to be deduced from the account of it[59]. Short as this account is, (and there needed not to

[57] Vitringa has not omitted to remind the reader of this verſe, that by *the ſun* the princes of the world are to be underſtood.

[58] VIII. 1.

[59] See this explanation of the ſeventh ſeal proved at large in Vitringa, though, indeed, he ſeems to have underſtood it of the univerſal Chriſtian church, rather than of the world at large. Conſult alſo Daubuz, p. 346, 347. That the laſt of the ſeals is predictive of the peace and proſperity of the church, after the fall of Antichriſt, was long ago obſerved by different commentators, and among others by the Venerable Bede, who flouriſhed in this country as early as the ſeventh century.

be

be any new exhibition of hieroglyphic emblems, ſince things were to continue as they were before repreſented to the apoſtle,) it conveys information, not only of the firſt importance, but altogether differing from the paſt experience of mankind. Hitherto the church of Chriſt, ever ſince its foundation, has been expoſed to fluctuations and to calamities. Hitherto the progreſs of ſociety has been often obſtructed: has been ſometimes retrograde. Hitherto no period of time has been exempt from the ſhock of revolutions and the proſecution of hoſtilities.

The words, which cloſe the prophetic deſcription that was laſt cited, are theſe (vii. 17), *and God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes*; and this very expreſſion occurs in ch. xxi, where St. John has given a ſtriking repreſentation of the millennium, a preſumption that both the deſcriptions are deſigned for the ſame period.

With reſpect, however, to the latter of the two deſcriptions it may be noted, previouſly to the allegation of the three principal verſes, that it correſponds not in all reſpects to the introductory ſtage of that period, but to the ſtate of things, which will, after a conſiderable period has elapſed, be eſtabliſhed. The *new* ſymbolic *heaven* and *new* ſymbolic *earth* the prophet announces in the firſt verſe of ch. xxi, and the paſſage has been already produced. The 3d, 4th, and 5th verſes are thus expreſſed: *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, ſaying, behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them*[60], *and they ſhall be his people. And God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God. And God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain: for the former things*

[60] 'I will dwell among you, not otherwiſe than if I had fixed my tabernacle in the midſt of you.' Crellius in loc.

*are paſſed away. And he that ſat upon the throne ſaid, behold, I make all things new. And he ſaid unto me, write: for theſe words are true and faithful*[61].

'Becauſe of this felicity,' ſays Peganius, 'all former 'troubles will be forgotten. There will be no more 'plagues, nor ſhall the Chriſtians die an *untimely* death; 'but, after a long life, by a gentle change be tranſlated 'into the life to come.' By the expreſſion, *there ſhall be no more death*, is ſignified, ſays Crellius, that there will be no more *violent* deaths; for thoſe few, which ſhall happen, will not be worthy of being included in the general account. 'In the Millennium,' ſays Daubuz on this verſe, 'they ſhall enjoy long the happy fruits of their 'holineſs, and exchange, as it were inſenſibly, and 'without ſorrow, their mortal fleſh with a ſpeedy hope 'and aſſurance to receive for it an immortal ſtate of 'life[62];' and 'there ſhall be no *anticipated* deaths be-'fore the uſual courſe of nature.'

Of the cauſes, which, it may be expected, will, at a future diſtant period, contribute to prevent a ſudden and premature diſſolution, it is not difficult to anticipate ſome of the principal.

Human life will rarely be endangered by the poiſons of the mineral, vegetable, or animal kingdoms; malignity will not adminiſter them; accident will ſeldom ſtumble upon them; and, when they do touch the ſkin,

[61] Of this verſe the former part implies, that this will be a ſtate of things on earth, which was once in a far different condition; the latter, that it will aſſuredly arrive.

[62] In v. 7 it is declared, *he that overcometh ſhall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my ſon.* On this verſe Peganius writes, 'the combat with fleſh and blood, it is true, ſhall not ceaſe, but the vic-'tory to thoſe, who are in earneſt, ſhall not be painful.' Temptations there will be; but he who conquers them will enjoy not merely the happineſs, which this world can impart, but that richer and more permanent inheritance, reſerved for him in a higher ſphere of action.

or enter the ſtomach, their fatal eſtects will generally be counteracted by the application of antidotes, which time has diſcovered to be little leſs than infallible. Beaſts of prey will be extirpated; or they will be awed by the neighbourhood and by the power of man. The inhabitants of every city will ſleep, unapprehenſive of the dagger of the aſſaſſin; ſuch as travel the public, and ſuch as purſue the moſt private, road, will alike be ſecure from the lawleſs aſſault of the robber; and thoſe, who traverſe the trackleſs ocean, will navigate their ſhips, and conduct their traffic, without recurring to any meaſures of defence againſt the deſperate enterprizes of the pirate. Capital puniſhments will be annulled. Maxims of falſe honour will no longer give birth to duelling, nor deſpair to ſuicide. Men will not be ſacrificed, as obſtinate heritics, or as expiatory victims, at the ſuggeſtion of the bigot or the fanatic. From ſucceſſive improvements in the ſtructure and the management of ſhips; from a more complete and accurate knowledge of ſeas, and rocks, and winds; from the practical precautions ſuggeſted by the great advances, which will doubtleſs be made in electricity; as well as from the ideas, which will generally prevail of the high value to be ſet on human life, and the criminality of a wanton expoſure of it to the hazard of deſtruction; a hope may not irrationally be entertained, that the fury of the tempeſt will be diſarmed of half its force, that the lightning will loſe much of its terrors, and that, in conſequence, the relics of ſhip-wrecked veſſels will ſcarcely ever be caſt even upon the moſt dangerous or the moſt commercial ſhores. The torch of civil diſſenſion and of domeſtic treaſon will be extinguiſhed; and, the cauſes of the hoſtility of nations being annihilated, or their interfering intereſts being adjuſted by mutual conceſſion and amicable negotiation, no longer will thouſands of the human race be collected together

gether to ſlaughter each other, upon the field of battle, or upon the boſom of the deep. Nor will a pacific behaviour be confined to thoſe nations alone, which are entitled civilized. The various tribes of ſavages, that inhabit the leſs frequented climes, having undergone a revolution in their manners and their ſituation, will relinquiſh the uſe of the arrow and the ſpear, the battle-ax and the ſcalping-knife. In the treatment of diſeaſes, and in the cure of wounds, ignorance and inexperience will ceaſe to be a fruitful ſource of the deſtruction of life; and no longer will men be ſwept away in crowds by thoſe contagious diſorders, which care and ſkill are capable of remedying. Nor will they prematurely deſtroy themſelves by a courſe of debauchery, or by habits of intoxication.

*Sorrow* and *pain*, alſo, in compariſon of the aſcendant they formerly had upon the globe, may be ſaid to be excluded from it; for with *the former things*, which *are paſſed away*, with Bad Government and Falſe Religion, not only war, diſcord, and peſtilence will, in a great degree, be baniſhed from the world; but alſo thoſe other evils which naturally flow from the ſame ſources, ſloth and ignorance, hypocriſy and perſecution, ſuperſtition and infidelity, exceſſive poverty and intemperate labour.

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*THE END.*

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